ABSTRACT
¡Conga No Va Carajo!
Christopher Santiago

My dissertation concerns peasant resistance to transnational gold mines in Cajamarca, Peru. This resistance is founded on people's experiences as expressed in songs, stories, jokes, dreams and direct political actions in the face of tremendous repression. Peasant experience itself is a powerful spiritual weapon in the lucha. Through immersion in the struggle, I wish to give a glimpse of the peasants’ lives as they confront environmental catastrophe. My work seeks to represent this resistance movement from the inside, as much as is possible. It is heart wrenching to hear a woman sing a song about how she lost her son to the police mercenaries. These moments of communion reveal the spirit of the struggle and forge the bonds which energize the resistance movement. Threatened by the death of the Earth, there is now a resurgence in consciousness of the Pacha Mama ("Earth Mother" in Quechua) which I believe to be the latest manifestation of Andean messianism, the idea that the Inca and Andean gods will return to cast out the Spanish and redeem history.
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LIST OF CHARACTERS

MAIN CHARACTERS

Atuq— (Quechua for ‘fox’) Atuq was my best friend during my time in Celendín. I lived with him for two years and became part of his extended family. By profession Atuq was a gym teacher at the central base. He was also a leader in nearly all of the social organizations that fight the mine: SUTEP, the PIC, Tierra & Libertad, the Rondas Campesinas. I hear Atuq is now the provincial president of SUTEP.

The mythological foxes who narrate the ‘boilings’ of The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down Below were taken by José María Arguedas from the Quechua manuscript compiled in the province of Huarochirí by the priest Francisco de Avila at the end of the sixteenth century, a manuscript that Arguedas translated and published with the title Gods and Men of Huarochiri. Regarding Arguedas’s Foxes, Christian Fernández writes, “These mythic foxes appear in the novel as foxes, but they also have the power to turn themselves into characters in the narrative.”1 We should also note that the mythological foxes are “able to traverse the borders between the world from up above and the world of down below, just as they are able to leave their mythical origins to come in to the present.”2

The Chaupe Family— The Chaupe family live in the heart of the Conga mega-project, alongside the Blue Lagoon. For this reason they have been victim to countless abuses at the hands of miners, police, the media, hostile neighbors and the juridical apparatus. For four years now they’ve faced eviction, death threats, physical and psychological violence, and legal harassment all in an attempt to get the family to abandon their land. The family is composed of Máxima and Jaime, and their children: Ysidora, Daniel, Carlos and Jhilda. Ysidora’s boyfriend Elias (who along with the family was fallaciously accused by Yanacocha of ‘aggravated usurpation’) and Daniel’s girlfriend Maribel are also members of the Chaupe family.

Máxima Acuña Atalaya de Chaupe— Máxima is seen as an incarnation of the resistance by many people far and wide. She was named the Woman Of The Year in December, 2012 by a activist collective in Lima. An article in La Republica called her the Lady of the Blue Lagoon. In 2014 Máxima received the Defender of the Year award from the Latin American Women’s Network (ULAM) and the National Special Award for Human Rights from the Human Rights Coordinator of Peru. Then in April, 2016 Máxima won the Goldman Environmental Prize, commonly called the ‘Green Nobel’. While the other winners all gave acceptance speeches, Máxima sang one of her songs. You might expect Máxima to be safe from further violence but the abuses against her and her family have continued. The Honduran environmental activist Berta Cáceres won the Goldman Prize for South America in 2015 for defending the Gualcarque River, its surrounding environment and people from the Agua Zarca Dam. She was killed by gunmen in her home.

Eriberto Huaman— Young man of peasant origins who is studying law and political science in University. He is one of the few people in Cajamarca that still abides by Andean beliefs and practices. Eriberto is also a passionate member of the resistance.

Daniel Gil— Long time Rondero, political activist, permaculturalist and song maker. As both peasant and intellectual he provides a unique perspective on the struggle.
OTHERS

Milton Sanchez— General Secretary of the P.I.C.

Edy Benevides— President of the Defense Front of Bambamarca who later became Provincial Mayor of Huallgayoc-Bambamarca.

Roger Ponce— Provincial President of the Rondas Campesinas of Celendín.

Idelson Hernandez— National President of the Rondas Campesinas.

Ramón Abanto Bernal— General Secretary of S.U.T.E.P.-Celendín.

Gregorio Santos (Goyo)— Regional President of Cajamarca who supports the lucha though many suspect he only sides with the people to benefit of his own political career. Goyo is currently in prison for corruption, bribery, conspiracy and racketeering. People say Goyo’s imprisonment is a form of political persecution because of his opposition to Conga.

Mauro Siles— Corrupt mayor of Celendín.

Roque ‘Cyanide' Benavides— Owner of Buenaventura mining company and member of one of the richest families in Peru.

Martyrs of Water— The five people killed by the police and military in July 2012 in the towns of Celendín and Bambamarca while demonstrating against the Conga project: Paulino García Rojas, Faustino Silva Sánchez, Antonio Sánchez Huamán, Joselito Vásquez Jambo, and César Medina Aguilar, a sixteen-year-old.

Señora Santos— Mother of Antonio Joselito Sánchez Huamán.

Maximila Aguilar Vásquez— Mother of César Medina Aguilar.

Rocio Silva Santisteban— Journalist, university professor, poet, and the Executive Secretary of the National Coordinator of Human Rights.

Marco Arana— Ex-priest and founder of both G.R.U.F.I.D.E.S. and Tierra y Libertad.


Lynda Sullivan— Irish activist who visited Celendín and stayed for 4 years. Lynda writes articles, keeps a blog in English (congaconflict.wordpress.com) and works at the Rural Library.

Alexander Luna— Photographer and film-maker from Lima, Peru.

Jorge Chavez— Young photographer and journalist who lives in Celendín.

INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The Guardians of the Lagoons— Peasant resistance movement dedicated to fighting the mines.

Plataforma Interinstitucional Celendina (P.I.C.)— Unites all the organizations in Celendín that fight against the Conga project.

Rondas Campesinas— The Rondas Campesinas or “Peasant Rounds” are a community justice force recognized by the Peruvian Constitution and found in villages throughout the country. The Rondas formed in Cajamarca in 1977.
Sindicato Unitario de Trabajadores en la Educación del Perú (S.U.T.E.P.)— Education workers union of Perú.

Grupo de Formación e Intervención para el Desarrollo Sostenible (G.R.U.F.I.D.E.S.)— A non-profit civil association that develops its activities in Cajamarca with a macro-regional perspective, from the approaches of Human Rights, Environmental Sustainability, Gender Equity and Solidarity Economic Development. The only local N.G.O. helping in the fight against the mines.

Tierra y Libertad [Land and Freedom]— a leftist political party in Perú founded by Father Macro Arana.

Tinkari— A music band whose members are active in the resistance. Their song “¡Agua Si, Oro No!” is the battlecry. The band describes itself as “The living cultural patrimony of Cajamarca”. Elmer Micha is one of the founding members.

Asociación Servicios Educativos Rurales (S.E.R.)— a private non-profit national institution aimed at promoting development and citizenship.

Mujeres en Defensa de la Vida— A new organization of women against the mine located in the city of Cajamarca.

Latin American Woman’s Union (U.L.A.M.)— A network of woman’s organizations that are supporting Máxima in her fight.

Pedro Paula Augusto Gil— or as Atuq would say, the “centro base” [central base], is an elementary school in the City of Celendín.

THE MINES

Yanacocha Mining Company— (Quechua: yana = "black", cocha = "lagoon") a gold mine in the northern highlands of Cajamarca, the poorest region of Peru. Yanacocha is the largest gold mine in South America and fourth largest in the world. The mine’s shareholders include Newmont of Denver, Colorado (51.35%), the Peruvian company Buenaventura (43.65%), and the World Bank’s IFC (5%).

The Conga Mega-Project— an expansion of Yanacocha Mining. If realized, Conga will be the 2nd largest gold mine in the world. Conga is situated on the headwaters of three different provinces: Cajamarca, Hualgayoc-Bambamarca and Celendín, which have joined together to forge the resistance.

HISTORICAL TREMORS

Atahualpa— (c.1502–1533) the last Sapa Inca [sovereign emperor] of Tawantinsuyu [the Inca Empire] before the Spanish conquest.

Francisco Pizarro— (c.1476–1541) a Spanish conquistador who led the expedition that conquered the Inca Empire. He captured and killed Incan emperor Atahualpa and claimed the lands for Spain.

Felipe Guaman Poma De Ayala— (c.1535–after 1616) a seventeenth century Quechua noble, native ethnographer and political reformer. Author of the 1,189 page illustrated chronicle Nueva corónica y buen gobierno [“The First New Chronicle and Good Government”] 1615-1616.
Túpac Amaru II— (1738 – 1781) born José Gabriel Condorcanqui. Leader of an indigenous uprising in 1780 against the Spanish in Peru. He was a mestizo who claimed to be a direct descendant of the last Inca ruler Túpac Amaru.

José María Arguedas— (1911–1969) a Peruvian novelist, poet, and anthropologist. Arguedas was a mestizo who wrote novels, short stories, and poems in both Spanish and Quechua. Remembered as one of the most notable figures of 20th-century Peruvian literature, Arguedas is especially recognized for his intimate portrayals of indigenous Andean culture. In order to depict indigenous expression and perspective more authentically, Arguedas created a new language that blended Spanish and Quechua.
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GLOSSARY

así— like this, like that (Sp).
ayllu— extended family and kinship networks (Q).
ayni— reciprocity (Q).
alforja— a hand woven sattlebag. Larger ones are for horses, smaller ones are for humans (Sp).
Bambachoa/a— a person from Bambamarca.
bases— grassroots, local organizations of every village or town (Sp).
calero— a small hollowed out gourd to keep limestone [cal] (Sp).
campesino— peasant (Sp).
cañacho—a person from Bambamarca.
bases— grassroots, local organizations of every village or town (Sp).
calero— a small hollowed out gourd to keep limestone [cal] (Sp).
campesino— peasant (Sp).
cancho— the roasted corn kernels people eat as a snack (Q).
cañazo— sugar-cane whiskey (Sp).
carlo— damn it (Sp).
chacra— small farm (Q).
chávere— cool, great, awesome (like bacán) (Sp).
chibolo—a young person (Q). Similar to cholo.
china— slang term for a girl (Sp).
cholo— Halfbreed. Formerly a derogatory term for a mixed-race person which became a term of endearment.
choza— a small hut where the shepherd rests while his or her animals graze (Q).
cocina—a sacred leaf of Andean peoples (Q).
cocha— lagoon, lake, pond or waterhole (Q).
cojudo— uncastrated, but more generally it is an idiot, a dickhead, a stupid prick (Sp).
compañero— comrade (Sp).
concha tu madre— literally ‘conch of your mother’ but commonly it means ‘cunt of your mother’ (Sp).
Conga No Va— The central chant against the mine (Sp).
daño— damage, illness or pain, often due to sorcery (Sp).
fuete— whip of the Ronderos.
gringo— slang for a white person (Sp).
gafó— stupid, fool (Sp).
guachimanes— watchman (Sp).
Huaca— sacredness (Q). A religious concept that is variously used to refer to sacred ritual, the state of being after death, or any sacred object. Huaca also means spirits that either inhabit or actually are physical phenomena such as waterfalls, mountains, or man-made shrines.
Huevadas— idiocy or nonsense (Sp).
Huevo— egg (Sp). Slang for testicles and penis.
Huevón— idiot, dumbass, fool (Sp). Sometimes Atuq just says ‘von’.
ichu— grass which grows on the high plateaus (Q).
lucha— the struggle against the mine (Sp).
lanques— sandals of leather or tire rubber that all the peasants wear.
Mal aire— ‘evil wind’ (Sp) is a folk illness found throughout Latin America. In Peru mal aire is directly attributed to the winds and powers of the Andes mountains. If cold or nighttime air enters into a person’s body it can cause ailments ranging from nausea, fatigue, abdominal pain, headache, as well as issues such as sadness, worry, crying and others.
mama— Mother (Q, Sp, & Eng).
minga— a collective work party (Q).
olla común— common pot (Sp). Food prepared by and for protestors.
Pacha Mama— Mother Earth (Q).
pago— payment (Sp). An offering made to the earth, lagoons or other nature deities.
pampa— immense grassy plains of the Andes (Q).
papa— potato (Q).
pendejo— jerk or idiot (Sp). The word sometimes also has the sense of 'cunning' and 'mischievous'. Literally pendejo means pubic hair.
plata— silver (Sp). Slang for money.
plaza de armas— town square (Sp).
poncho— large cloaks that all the peasants wear (Sp).
pucha, pucta, puta— slightly less offensive versions of puta [whore] (Sp). Atuq often uses this word for the affective charge, as an exclamation, rather than direct it at or about women.
pueblo— the village itself and also the people of the village (Sp).
pues— Peruvians litter their sentences with pues [then, well] as a meaningless filler word. The shortened form pe is common (Sp).
pukio— waterhole (Q).
Rondas Campesinas— autonomous peasant patrols found throughout rural Peru. A mechanism of community justice recognized by Peruvian constitution.
Shilico/a— a person from Celendin.
sombrero— large straw hats that all the peasants wear (Sp).
sombrerero— large straw hats that all the peasants wear (Sp).
Sumak Kawsay— good living (Q). Throughout South America, it is a way of living in harmony within communities, ourselves, and most importantly, nature. In Cajamarca, the concept of Sumak Kawsay is popularly referred to as “convivencia” or “coexistence.” “More recently, sumak kawsay has been incorporated into Ecuadorian and Bolivian governments as a way of granting rights to nature. The concept of sumak kawsay was incorporated into Ecuador’s 2008 Constitution, which was the first country to legally acknowledge rights of nature.” https://www.pachamama.org/sumak-kawsay
susto— a cultural illness primarily among Latin American cultures (Sp). It is described as a condition of being frightened and chronic somatic suffering stemming from emotional trauma or from witnessing traumatic experiences lived by others. Susto may be conceptualized as a case of spirit attack. Symptoms of susto are thought to include nervousness, anorexia, insomnia, listlessness, fever, depression, and diarrhea.
Tawantinsuyu— the Inca Empire (Q).
tombo— slang for cop (Sp).
trueque— a traditional form of barter (Q).
uyway— mutual relations of care among human and other beings (Q).
vinsa— Symbol of the Ronderos, a vinsa is a whip made from the masculine member of a bull.
vivaso— a person who lives off other people by continually taking advantage of them.
Ya— This little word is very complicated and, depending on the context, has various different meanings (Sp). Here are a few: Ya: already, now, right now, later, no longer. Ya is also used for emphasis. Ya lo sé: I already know. No ya: Not only. Ya que: now that, since.
yanantin— complementary dualism (Q).
yerba— general word for herbs and plants (Sp).
1. INTRODUCTION
The Department of Cajamarca, Peru

Figure 1.1
The Provinces of Cajamarca

The Conga mega-project is located in the headwaters of Hualgayoc-Bambamarca, Celendin and Cajamarca.
The Mines of Cajamarca, 4500 m.a.s.l.
“Roque is a person with a lot of money, living in luxury, eating big delicacies, in his house with his son and all his family. One day he says to his son: ‘Son, get yourself ready, I am going to bring you to the country for three days so that you see how the country people suffer. There is a tremendous poverty and I want you to feel the suffering of these people.’ Sure enough, Roque brought his son to the country for three days. They came to a little house where there was such tremendous humility, all the people in the house were eating their sweet potatoes with many little dogs and cats… Well, the child observed and observed the humility and the simplicity of this country house. And, like this, for three days they visited different houses. And Roque, when they returned to their house in Lima, again he calls his son and says: ‘Son, what have you learned from these three days in which I brought you to the country, where you saw the poverty of those people, how they live, wretched, they don’t even have enough to eat, they only eat sweet potatoes.’ The son of Roque said, ‘Papá, I learned many things from the three days that you brought me to the country.’ ‘What have you learned son?’ ‘We, Papá, live here in Lima, in this house, in this mansion, where it’s true we have many lamps, many lightbulbs in our house, but them, these humble people, as you say, don’t have lamps, don’t have lightbulbs in their houses, but they have all the stars of the universe. Also, I learned that while we have one little dog, they have five or six dogs in their house. Also, I learned that while here you only spend one hour a month with us, the children there have time to talk every day and every night with their papá and with their mamá. Therefore, papá, I have learned that if you were to let me live in the country with them, I would be happier than I am living here with you. It’s true that here we have a patio, they don’t have a patio, but they have all the mountains, they have everything in its liberty. It’s true that here in this mansion we have a pool, but they have all the rivers of their pueblos, which have no end. So, papá, I ask that you let me live there because there they live with a tremendous happiness.”

[The above story is about Roque ‘Cyanide’ Benavides]
In November 2011 hundreds of poor country people in the department of Cajamarca of highland Peru launched the *lucha*, which means *fight*, against the transnational gold mining mega-project known as Conga. Then in October 2012, they formed two camps to hold vigil over their threatened lagoons. One camp was located on a hillside overlooking the Mamacocha lagoon in the province of Hualgayoc-Bambamarca. The other camp was located in the province of Celendín, overlooking the Azul lagoon. This second camp was on the Chaupe family’s land.
Ya I dawned\(^3\) ya it’s day, ay why’d I dawn (mabayuuahhhhyaahhay),
ay I don’t want to be known (ohhhhhhh),
nor that they know where I am (Uhhhyaaahhayyyyy),
nor that they know where I am, (yuuuahhhhyyayyyyyahhy)
CONGA NO VA NI HOY NI MAÑANA!

The land is black, the sky is filled with that deep blue of dawn, the clouds smother and
engulf everything, reaching from here to a distant black peak, dark irregular mountain silhouette
cut out against the only patch of sky beaming bright through the dark blue mass of clouds. Laughter
bubbles up, as do bird trills. The blue plastic tents\(^4\) appear as dim shards of sky which have fallen
to earth. Then I hear singing coming from the different tents scattered along the hillside. The men are singing ‘yarabis’ or ‘tristes’, sad songs at dawn. Not having slept most of the night, cheeks bulging with coca, the chirp chirp chirp of the calero, and the glowing red ember of the cigaret end, passed around in the darkness, syncopated with swigs of cañaso. The singing builds to a rupture, breaks and trails out warbling. Next verse. There was something in that moment, and something embedded in this memory: the dawn, the rondas campesinas having become guardians of the lagoons, the silence broken by these heartbreaking laments, issuing up out of the darkness. A primordial moment, a mythological instant: the birth of the world.

I was welcomed into every tent, going around bliss dazed in the morning, stunned by the overwhelming beauty of waking up to these sad songs, different songs being sung simultaneously all around the camp: “pase pase, pase gringo.” [Come in, gringo.]

The woman in the cooking tent says, “this is for the crazies, for the rain, and for the tents, and for all the crazies”. Tarp plastic rippling, rain speckled. The tents full of bodies, I sleep wedged in between a bag of rice and an elbow. The man next to me using a garbage bag full of toilet paper as a pillow. The first night I was by the opening and froze. Suddenly the plastic swollen with rainwater gave way and came crashing down on the man next to me: “¡concha su madre!” [Motherfucker!]

The Andes are filled with songs. I remember when we were up in the Celendín camp surrounded by the DINOES, a special operations unit of the Peruvian National Police (PNP). Squatting under plastic tarps that whipped in the wind and rain, with despair beginning to creep into our hearts, Daniel Gil suddenly broke into song and in that moment the world was transformed. It was a song which he himself had composed in memory of the deaths on July 3rd and 4th, 2012 at the
hands of the PNP and military. On the second verse of each couplet, the people sang along with him:

That day, 3rd of July, in Cajamarca was heard
Shots of machine guns, left dead and wounded.
One dead in Bambamarca, four dead in Celendín.
The greed of Ollanta, put them under the rifle.
For the greed of gold, villages remain in mourning.
Crying orphans and disabled wounded.
God, I don’t know if you exist, sometimes you make me doubt.
Father God, why do you permit that children are left to cry?
Mamacha of Bambamarca
Look what’s happening
Look at how your children of the village
Are being killed.
Mamachita Celendína
Look what’s happening
Look at how your children of the village
Are being killed.5

The Andes are also filled with stories. One time Jamie Chaupe told me about a military helicopter that disappeared into the Lagoon El Perol: “It swallowed it, swallowed a helicopter that was passing, took it down with all the soldiers inside.” At first I was shocked to hear of Nature retaliating against the mining-military regime, but the more time I spent in the jalca [highlands] the more apparent it became that these stories were everywhere. I heard that when the miners were opening up a road by the Mamacocha lagoon one of the drivers fell asleep and his machine was swallowed up: “until this day they haven’t found it. The lagoon ate it.” Jaime told me about a mountain that killed an entire team of miners. Yanacocha was building an irrigation canal that passed through a mountain named Nueva Grande. Around the bend there was another mountain named Chilín and this mountain would call out, “Nueva Grande, Nueva Grande… are you such a coward that you let them carve a hole in your ass from one side to the other?” Jaime explained that Chilín insulted Nueva Grande so that Nueva Grande would fight back and not let the miners make the canal. The next morning the miners were putting their explosives around, “and blew ‘em up ya
¡PLUM! But some didn’t blow ya, and after an hour they went to see why ya they got up close and ¡PLUM! it sent them to the abyss. The mountain swallowed them. They died there, two engineers, a foreman and a bunch of laborers, and since then they’ve left it alone ya, they haven’t been able to, and why? Because the Nueva Grande didn’t want it. The mountain has its guardians pue. When the mountain is wild it won’t let them destroy it, its guardians won’t let them destroy it.” What struck me was the solidarity between the mountains, how they protect each other: “for example, right now the miners are studying Chilín but the Nueva will speak again when they try to destroy Chilín, when they try to exploit him.”

The Andes are rich: “Chilín is millionaire in gold, the ancients say. They say there is a priest of gold, a train of gold, and an airplane of gold too, because they say that they’ve seen when the train goes to the other mountain and returns, but I haven’t seen the train, what I’ve seen is the airplane, during the green moons an airplane of gold would fly from Chilín to the Nueva Grande and back again, I myself have seen this, it’s not like somebody told me about it…” But the Andes do not give their riches away for nothing. Jaime said, “in order that they take the gold out of that lagoon, I’ve heard that it asks them for truckloads of people.”

“Truckloads of white sugar,” Máxima corrects him.

Jaime continues, “And the engineers are giving away truckloads of sugar to the lagoon. The lagoon asks for people but the engineers say that in the meantime they’re giving it truckloads of white sugar... and truckloads of fruit. Apples, oranges, and others... other fruits more.” In this tale Jaime and Máxima show us that not even the engineers are exempt from the demands of reciprocity and sacrifice.

I asked a man by the Mamacocha lagoon, “do you know the word Apu?” He responded, “Yes, the Apu is the owner of the lagoons.” He told me that not many people talked that way
anymore but still everyone knew what it meant. The man continued: “The Apu is part of the bad spirit, it appears and disappears in a moment pue, it’s like an air.” I asked perplexed, “But the lagoons are also God’s no?” I was fascinated by how the sacred was veiled in ambivalence, containing both positive and negative aspects typical of Andean dualism.6 The man said, “The lagoons are part of God pue, and like I said, there’s also a bad part no? part of the Devil, a malign part also.” Andean religiosity was diabolized by the Spanish Extirpators of Idolatry, but now due to the mining conflicts, the lagoons have changed in local perceptions from evil to holy. As the lyrics of another of Daniel Gil’s songs go, “I don’t know why God has made the lagoons above the gold, maybe he has done it to see who serves God, who the Devil.” It is very common to hear such moralizing. Jaime told me, “God has put all that nature for man so that he administer it, not so that he destroy it...” and yet the evil value of the lagoons, and the sacrifices they demand, still persists. People told me,

“The owner of the lagoon is the Devil, with which the gringo engineers must negotiate. The Devil asks for a good amount of... of personnel. And a good amount of sugar...like 20 tons, so they can extract the gold of these lagoons. If not, no, they can not extract and it can eat them, it can... ya disappear them for good, the people that enter to work in this lagoon...some say a good amount of sheep, but they’re not sheep, they are people that work in the mine, they give their own workers as gifts, in 2, 3 years ya the workers ya die ya. They die. And they say when people visit the lagoons, they see these persons there... inside the lagoon.”7

Jaime told me that the same respect must be maintained for local mountain peaks like La Picota. If you go up to the top, you’d better bring the mountain a gift of white sugar or otherwise it will turn itself into one sheer rock cliff “and ya no,” you won’t be able to get back down. La Picota also has medicinal plants that only appear if you bring the mountain its gift. These are stories which Jaime’s grandparents told him of times when “there weren’t people over there pue, but now ya they’ve tamed the mountain ya because there are people living there now...” In times past, the jalca [highland] was a remote, haunted place only visited by curiosos who knew how to make
Nature open, revealing its hidden treasures. Back in those days the land was fierce. The water of the lagoons ran altaso [really high, overflowing]. The people would approach and “the lagoon would separate, it would open and swallow you. The water would say, ’Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaa’, inside.”

A neighbor told me, “They say this Azul lagoon has an immense profundity and inside there are big areas of land pues... inside... inside, inside... there are corals, there are saucos trees and they’d even tell that there are animals inside, and I’d ask, ‘how have these people seen that there are animals?’” The man’s son replied, “they must be dreaming, pue...” The father continues, “Like in dreams, it must be... some have dreamed it... and I say to destroy that lagoon, pucha that would spoil it forever.” Jaime told me a story about when his parents had seen a mountain open itself up: “This must have been in ’85. I was still a chibolo pue, but I remember they came home scared and were talking about it.” Jaime’s parents were weeding the papas⁸ and it began to rain so they went to hide themselves in a little cave, “just like the one that we’re in now,” he added. It so happened that we were in the same cave that the Chaupes had slept in after the police had beaten them and destroyed their shelters. It was very small and not much space for a whole family. Jaime continued his story: “my parents were hiding and then they heard the mountain say, ‘TALAN’. It opened the door, it opened, and right there they raced to their house ya, and from there they saw the clouds part and they say that the door was open there in the cave, and then another cloud came and ‘TA-LAN’ is what it said again and it closed.”

When I was up in the Andes mythic forces could return from the depths of prehistory at any moment, as when Jaime told me about “The Mother of the Water, of the pukios [waterholes], she can appear as a frog, a horse, a bull, sometimes a cow, or in lower parts, a snake. When their Mother comes out, the huaicos [massive landslides]⁹ come out and every bit of the earth goes behind her. Water comes out first, makes a tremendous sound that is heard 2 thousand, 3 thousand
kilometers away and behind her goes the earth, every last bit goes, it doesn’t want to leave its Mother. Earth and water they go behind their Mother. She could take my house, todo [everything]... ay sometimes she takes people, or kills people also.” And yet, as Jaime continued to narrate, I felt I was witness to a perpetual reenactment of the conquest of pre-Columbian thought, where bodies of water were considered female, daughters of Mamacocha [Ocean or literally, Mother Lagoon]: “ya ya God was watching and tossed three bolts of lightnings which we call the thunders of the sky. Kills her and there ya, she returns no more ya.” Alberto Galindo, in his book on Andean Utopia, calls this subterranean divinity that emerges from lagoons amaru and connects it with Tupac Amaru, the leader of the indigenous revolt against colonialism that shook the Andes in the 1780s. The rainy season was “the time of the rebellion itself when overflowing rivers and plummeting mud and rocks destroy everything in their path.”

“It’s its nature, like this, of the water pue,” Máxima chimes in.

“In the green moons she comes out to bother my animals.”

“Have you ever seen her?” I asked.

“Yes once in my life, I saw an animal but it was far away and I couldn’t tell what type but like this, an animal went running and the storms criss-crossed in front of her, like this, and they didn’t catch her and she just kept running, and wherever she went, the water went too, with the landslide, with the earth, everything. It followed her.”

A family of peasants in the Bambamarca camp said the cordilleras were formed when two giant serpents passed underground, raising up the earth as they went. The serpents each had a rib that stuck out, cutting inside the earth. One went in the direction of Cajamarca and the other went in the direction of Celendin but they didn’t make it cause lightening bolts and thunder killed them, “didn’t let them reach the pueblos.”

“This is reality,” the man’s wife assured me, “it’s true.”
“Were they evil beings?” I asked.

“Yup, like demons.”

There were also anti-capitalist stories about the dangers of greed, stories that espoused the folk wisdom of reciprocity and respect, such as the tale Máxima told me about the Lagoon El Perol. Her first sentence highlights the ambivalence of good and evil: “Our lagoon El Perol before was hermosísima, very beautiful, very gorgeous, very lovely! It had its... as it was a beautiful lagoon, gorgeous, it has the histories that it has...¡era mala! [it was bad!]” The lagoon would throw out apples and oranges along its shore, but when peons went to gather them, the fruit would disappear. Then a lucma plant appeared and a peon climbed the plant to eat the lucma, “but after that the plant appeared in the middle of the lagoon and disappeared him. And like that it continued...while it went ya eating the people like this the people would not approach.” Until one day a commoner saw two peroles [pots] of gold at the edge of the lagoon. He took them out, but when he tried to bring them home, he found he could not carry them alone. He went to get his family but when he came back ya he didn’t find the peroles. The peroles had returned to the lagoon. He entered... and a wave came, drowning the man. Máxima continued, “Right now the businessmen, the miners, the engineers are transferring our water of our lagoon El Perol so that they can take out the gold...it’s there, the gold, fixed, pure, washed in the lagoon of El Perol...the gold itself produces the water in order to maintain the pueblo.” For Máxima, gold, water and people exist in a web of reciprocal relationships. For her and other campesinos, the landscape still contains a pre-Christian value beyond good and evil.

These stories work with a language of vivid imagery in which Nature is imbued with animistic powers that test the limits of morality as scored in human families and communities. This presents an ontology that the West has long forgotten. Throughout the Andes, there is kinship
between people and the powers of Nature. These powers became alienated and transformed into demons under Christianity, yet it is the violation of the ethical imperative to sacrifice which truly accounts for their malice. Marcel Mauss’ seminal work *The Gift* teaches us that to deny reciprocity with the gods, the true owners of the world’s wealth, is to invite death and ruin.\(^{15}\) Yanacocha exploits the logic of sacrifice with their paternalistic gifts, giving the peasants stoves, gas, seeds, sweatshirts, hats, or even laptops\(^{16}\), but most people know that these are not real gifts because they are not motivated by generosity. The mine will never commit a true sacrifice, that is, giving of itself. The ancient practice of gift-exchange and the values of sacrifice, reciprocity, generosity, redistribution of wealth and mutual respect which this mode of exchange promotes exist like a shadow alongside the new forms of commodity exchange and their values of possessive individualism, competitive profit seeking, and private accumulation. These two sets of value are irreconcilable. No matter how much the mine may claim to be sustainable and socially responsible, the lagoons still hunger for blood and sugar. Rather than exchange that perpetuates a set of perennial reciprocal relations like the peasant’s exchange with the earth, industrial mining is “the exchange that ends all exchange.”\(^{17}\) The mine and the commodity exchange which is its guiding logic ensures barrenness and death instead of fertility and prosperity.\(^{18}\) The mine is supposed to produce wealth yet the peasants know that in actuality Yanacocha violently, excessively consumes wealth. As another protest song by Daniel Gil goes: “The Yanacocha mine is a ravenous beast, it destroys the environment, doesn’t let one live in peace.” The Andean deities are also known for their “voracious appetites”\(^{19}\) but if you feed the Earth Mother, she will feed you in return. Certainly, this exchange was always marked by ambiguity: “One is as likely to be eaten by the gods as to be fed by them.”\(^{20}\) The Andean deities and humanity share this, both “are consummate ‘eaters.’”\(^{21}\) Following “strict norms of courtesy”\(^{22}\) the Mother must be satisfied, and one must give and accept her
gift ‘con cariño’ [with tenderness], ‘con todo corazón’ [with all the heart]. Pacha Mama [Earth Mother] demands sacrifice but what she takes she gives back: “blood spilled over the earth, wounded and dead foretold upcoming harvests.” In contrast, Yanacocha is the gift that keeps on taking. The unreciprocated earth and lagoons respond with war.

Figure 1. 7
THE NIGHTMARE OF HISTORY

“...at its base exchange presents itself as a process of expenditure, over which a process of acquisition has developed...exchange might have as its origin not the need to acquire that it satisfies today, but the contrary need, the need to destroy and to lose.” — Georges Bataille

One morning when a few of us were hiking back to the trucks after a frozen night wrapped up like a human möbius strip shivering in the wet grass with only a few blankets and plastic tarps stretched over a chaos of bodies, we stopped at a foreboding mountain peak and Daniel Gil dipped his sombrero into a water hole and drank from it. Then he said to me, “Everything you can see in every direction will be destroyed.”
The Yanacocha mine is the largest gold mine in South America. It takes its name from a lagoon it has already devoured.\(^{27}\) The Black Lagoon is now an open pit visible from outer space. The mine’s shareholders include Newmont of Denver, Colorado (51.35%), the Peruvian company Buenaventura (43.65%), and the World Bank’s IFC (5%). Nearing the end of its ‘life cycle’, Yanacocha now wants to expand and realize the $4.8-billion Conga mega-project which, if completed, will be the second largest gold mine in the world and largest investment in Peruvian history. Conga will turn the Perol Lagoon into an open pit 2km across and 1km deep. The earth excavated from Perol will be treated with cyanide and then deposited into the Azul Lagoon transforming it into an enormous toxic dump. Conga is expected to produce an average of 90,000 tons of waste tailings per day, every day for 17 years.\(^{28}\) The destruction includes countless highland lagoons, rivers, streams and wetlands composing the watersheds which sustain three provinces and tens of
thousands of people. These areas are subject to Peruvian laws (the General Law of the Environment and the law relating to water resources) but despite contravening these laws the company continues to develop the project. The Environmental Supervisor of Yanacocha says, “there’s only mosquitos,” living at the Perol Lagoon, so what’s the big deal?

The province of Hualgayoc-Bambamarca has two dead rivers due to 200 years of mining. The water runs yellow and thick with contamination. About the city of Hualgayoc people say, ‘ya no hay agua pues,’ there’s no water, it comes in cisterns once a day, if they’re lucky, brought by Goldfields, another mine in the area. “Es un pueblo fantasma… it’s a ghost town, deserted, desert-like… pure sand and rocks, pure dump trucks.” Dust clouds. A statue of Jesus missing his right hand. Statues of miners, always white skinned, down the steps and on either side of the arch marking the entrance to the city. The arch reads, “Hualgayoc: collar de plata” [silver-collar]. In a tiny garden I see signs reading, “the plants give oxygen, take care of them!” and “the flowers beautify, conserve them!” But behind the signs I see a steamroller and a crane. There is a deep gash in the earth, dividing the town in two. I ask someone, “what are they constructing this tunnel for?”

“I don’t know.”

Upon my arrival, a woman warned me not to ask people about the mine. I told her I was against it but, as if she didn’t hear me, she says, “the rondas will catch you and whip you.” I tell her again that I’m against the mine. She says, “Oh! Well still, just say you’re a tourist.” The Conga project will destroy the only two existing water sources for Hualgayoc-Bambamarca, the Pumagón and Llaucano rivers, leaving the province with no water.

I remember the shocking headline I saw on a news stand in the city of Cajamarca, “The Rio Grande is totally contaminated…Water that arrives at El Milagro has mercury, lead, uranium and cyanide.” “There is much confusion...” laments the Operations Manager, “As a treatment
plant we do not have the capability of treating water with heavy metals.”31 The *Rio Grande* is now an artificial river, “*un afluente industrial,*”32 flowing out of long black tubes from Yanacocha, tubes which read *agua acida* [acid water]. There are numerous instances of trout deaths in the tens of thousands. The band Tinkari has commemorated these tragedies in their song *Agua Si, Oro No*, the battle cry of the *lucha*: “They say the trout die, because they don’t know how to swim. Like this Ollanta will die, for not knowing how to govern.” And yet a headline of *El Mercurio* from August 2012 states: “Bad intentions question the quality of water in Cajamarca”. Sara Palacios, Regional Advisor of Cajamarca, claims that in addition to cases of stomach cancer, birth defects are also on the rise: “Ah, let’s see, the cases of birth defects here in Cajamarca, mainly there is anencephaly, that is children that are born without a brain no? Eh, imperforate anus, esophageal atresia this is when the esophagus is closed no? There is syndactyly or polydactyly that is when the children that are born do not complete the division no? of the fingers, both of the hands and the feet. There is meningocele no? the protrusion of the spinal cord, also there is spina bifida [split spine], and there are also hairlips…” For denouncing the water contamination in Cajamarca, Sara Palacios has in turn been accused of being motivated by a ‘political attitude’ and of ‘generating panic in the population.’33

On June 2nd, 2000 151 kilograms of liquid mercury spilled over a 25 mile long area, contaminating three mountain villages, including Choropampa. The people ran to collect it with their hands thinking it was *azogue*, an ancient cure-all. More then 900 people were poisoned from the spill. A video produced by Yanacocha Mining in Nov. 2000, five months after the spill, states: “Today, the health of the *Choropampinos* is fully restored. The attended residents find themselves in their homes, and realize their daily chores with complete normality.” Nevertheless, the people cry to be heard: “My child has become red and inflamed, blood flowing from his nose, from his
mouth and he finds himself bien mal [very bad]. They say that there is no mercury, that there is no contamination, and if there was no contamination why are we sick?” In December 2003, a consultancy firm hired by the World Bank analyzed the mercury spill in 2000. The results relieve Yanacocha of any responsibilities and from any obligation to pay compensation. Roque Benavides, President of Minas Buenaventura, only makes excuses: “Nobody was dead. Nobody was dead. Mercury never got to the waters. And certainly, there have been some complaints. We had an insurance policy for the whole population for five years. This will continue for another five years. So it was not all that bad.”34

As of March 2014 a new threat of toxic waters “with strange and abundant foam” have arose in the hamlet of San Juan, just downhill from the San Juan reservoir and botadero [dump] of Yanacocha.

Furthermore recent changes to Peruvian law have enabled what many call the ‘criminalization of protest’35, including laws which grant impunity to police who use lethal force and laws which allow the police to serve as the private security of the mining company. On November 24th, 2011 the police turned their live ammunition against the protestors and a number of demonstrators were seriously injured, including Elmer Campos who was shot in the spine and is now confined to a wheel chair. People in the cities of Celendin, Huasmin and Sorochuco rioted and burned the mining offices. On December 4th, 2011 President Humala declared a 60 day state of emergency in the region of Cajamarca, suspending civil liberties and prohibiting any form of organizing. Then, on the 3rd and 4th of July 2012, five people were killed by the police, the youngest of which was just 16 years old, shot in the head from a helicopter.36 These events led President Humala to declare another 30 day state of emergency in the provinces of Cajamarca, Bambamarca and Celendin on July 5th, 2012. This state of emergency was then extended at the beginning of August for another
30 days. The military occupied the city of Celendin for 8 months. It was a regular sight to see soldiers marching down the streets. I heard stories of how they urinated and defecated in the city’s water supply. They left behind at least ten underage single mothers. The Vice President of the Rondas was facing 32 years in prison for leading the interception of a group of these soldiers. After a long legal battle the ronero leader escaped prison but had to pay a hefty fine.

Community leaders are harassed by a barrage of legal allegations. More than 303 leaders have been prosecuted for issues related to social protest: rioting, resisting arrest, rebellion, terrorism. Frontline Human Rights Defenders calls these charges ‘frivolous’ or ‘unfounded in nature’ rather than a ‘genuine violation of the law.’ Instigating legal cases against protestors and community leaders is part of a strategy. Those accused are obligated to travel far from their homes to attend hearings (sometimes they receive charges from places they’ve never been to before), pay for legal representation at his or her own expense, as well as being physically and mentally exhausting. Milton Sanchez, General Secretary of the P.I.C., has received 50 charges, yet has not been convicted once. One charge laid against Milton is that of ‘psychological damage’, allegedly inflicted by him against the mining company.

Yanacocha’s Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is widely criticized by academics, lawyers, civil society, and the local communities. World renowned hydrogeologist expert Robert Moran describes how the EIA fails to examine the complex subterranean water system which connects the mountain lagoons to the wetlands and rivers. Due to the severe lack of essential information needed to understand the real effect of the extraction activities, Moran calls it “basically a public relations document, intended to promote the acquisition of permits.” Another report heavily criticizing the EIA came from the government itself – lead by Jorge de Chave, then Vice Minister of Environmental Management, who soon resigned after the government refused to release it.
Despite these deficiencies and criticisms, the EIA was approved. This is not surprising however considering who passed it; unlike other countries where the Ministry of Environment is responsible for approving EIAs, in Peru it is the Ministry of Energy and Mining who approves its own projects, a fact considered by some to be unconstitutional. Furthermore, the engineer who was responsible for the writing of the EIA, Felipe Ramirez del Pino, while working for Yanacocha, then entered the Ministry of Energy and Mines to approve his own work. This is typical of the revolving door between mining companies and the government in Peru. Additionally, the presentation of the EIA, the only chance for the affected communities to have their say, served no such function. The ‘audience’ took place in La Encañada, in the province of Cajamarca, despite the fact that 80 percent of the effects of Minas Conga would be felt in the province of Celendín. The vast majority of Celendín citizens, including those living nearest to the proposed Conga site, were not even informed about the existence of the EIA, never mind an event to present its contents. Yanacocha claims that 31 out of 32 affected communities were consulted; campaigners claim the actual number of communities affected would be 200 – and most of them were not consulted.

The realization of the project will open the gates for mass exploitation of the entire region of Cajamarca; Conga is one mega mining project, the largest and most well-known, but there are others waiting on the sideline. According to a study by Yanacocha’s Andes Association Forum (ALAC) in 2006, 79 percent of the proven and probable gold within Peru is located in the provinces of Cajamarca and Celendín, as well as 30 percent of the copper reserves of the country. This has resulted in an avalanche of mining concessions – 69.95 percent of the province of Cajamarca and 58.80 percent of Celendín is under concession to mining companies. Neighbouring Hualgayoc is 91 percent concessioned. Yanacocha has almost finished exploiting its primary and satellite projects, and after Minas Conga it has three other projects in the region at the exploration stage. A
Chinese company, Lumina Copper SAC – part-owned by the Chinese government – is waiting to realize its 2,500 million copper project Galeno. British Anglo American are at the exploration stage of their Michiquillay project, La Granja project belongs to British/Australian Rio Tinto, and Canadian Sulliden Mining Corporation is hoping to progress with its copper and gold Shahuindo project. There are several other smaller projects also at the exploration stage. If all of these projects were realized Cajamarca would effectively be transformed into one of the largest mining districts in the world.
“El río Grande está totalmente contaminado”

“El rio Grande is totally contaminated”
HUNGER

“the world is hungry and not concerned with culture” – Antonin Artaud

Hunger is a base desire, a primordial experience. Hunger, along with excretion, links us back to the animals and the earth, that is, the base. The campesinos are closer to the base. They are the base themselves, along with the earth, mud, blood, shit and piss. We can imagine the rupture of history as this separation between the base and the ideal. The Enlightened westerner might like to imagine that he or she can leave the base behind all together, but the base is of critical importance as it supports and nourishes the realm of ideas. Sublimation is the movement of Progress away
from the base and towards the ideals of civilization. From this perspective, the base is only valuable in so far as it is *useful*. The opposite movement, going back downwards to hunger and the instincts, is called desublimation, which is crucial for a revaluation of the base as more than just exploited substratum. Revalued, the base is revealed to be the very crucible of creation and destruction, without which the higher intellectual and spiritual development of humanity would be impossible. When cut off from the base, sublimation is essentially a movement away from life, away from the instincts and the earth and towards abstract cultural ideals that have become fundamentally separated from nature in order to then dominate nature. Desublimation would thus be to destroy civilization by bringing the ideal back down to the base. Imagine a solar anus, for example, or eating gold.

**EATING GOLD**

For kids will die certainly.
The old and rich will live on awhile,
As always,
Eating blood and gold,
Letting kids die.

—Langston Hughes

While running for president in 2011, Ollanta Humala visited Cajamarca. On stage before hundreds of people, and with many more watching from T.V.s and computers, Ollanta referred to the mining conflict as “a wound in the face of Cajamarca.” He assured the people that the lagoons of Cajamarca are not for sale…

OLLANTA: “And they say you want to sell. Do you want to sell your water?”
“NO!”
“Because the miners say you want to sell. We’ve done a consultation with them, but have they consulted you?”
“NO!”
“Because which is more important, water or gold?”
“WATER!”

“Because you don’t drink gold, you don’t eat gold but we drink water, our creatures drink water, our cattle drink water and from there comes the milk, the cheese, the wealth. Agriculture needs water. I promise to respect the will of Cajamarca… we have to defend our country!” affirmed an energetic Ollanta in a poncho and sombrero. That phrase, “you don’t eat gold,” along with his donning peasant garb, was specifically designed to target the campesinos’ unconscious phantasies and exploit their struggle. People never forgot these promises of Ollanta, nor did they forget the words he used. They repeated this phrase to me time and time again. Out in the mountains I’d hear campesinos, who probably never realized that the phrase came from Ollanta, say: “you don’t eat gold pue.”

But once he got into office Ollanta quickly changed his tune: “The Conga project is an important project for Peru because it will allow us to realize the great transformation and social inclusion that we offered to the Peruvian pueblo… We refuse extreme positions: water or gold. We propose a sensible position: water and gold.” President Ollanta now spoke of expanding and improving the hydrological study of the Environmental Impact Assessment in order to absolve doubts about the lagoons. He guaranteed water for all the communities of Cajamarca. He demanded that, instead of cement reservoirs, Yanacocha construct “modern lagoons” with state of the art technology to ensure subterranean water flow, and also that they make more lagoons to ensure that everybody receive the mining benefits. “We are at your disposal to clarify with transparency and humility all of the doubts, which are legitimate of course, that arise from the communities and poblacion de pie [common people]. All of you are important, there are not first class and second class citizens.” Apparently, not only do the miners eat gold, but they also eat shit.
Seeing as how gold is sublimated shit and shit is desublimated gold, when he talks bullshit like this, we could just as easily say president Ollanta eats shit.

Conga was meant to be the great transformation, from 3rd World to 1st World, from brute to civilized subject, riding the Hegelian spirit ever upward to absolute knowledge. Meanwhile, the greatest transformation that Ollanta achieved was in his discourse. At first he said, the voice of the pueblo is the voice of God. He pledged to make the country more just and less unequal. He slogan was “honesty is the difference.” But he switched from a red shirt to a white shirt, which also happen to be the colors of Peru, highlighting the split in national identity. Now, instead of the pueblo, he says he will defend the constitution against the mining opposition. ‘Water or Gold’ became ‘Water and Gold.’ The Economist has remarked on the “schizophrenic quality” of his government. Political analyst Carlos Basombrío says that the forces that surround Ollanta (the media, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the commercial sector) delineate his thought: “Humala is a man that has no thoughts of his own.”

Ollanta has denied speaking a double discourse. As he sees it, he’s constantly taking the pulse of the reality of the country: “the message of Gana Perú is the same as in 2006, because we seek a model that will achieve social inclusion, and reduce poverty through an improvement of distribution. The difference is that now we understand that changes should be made in a gradual manner, little by little.” He’s just being pragmatic, reasonable, says congressman Rubén Coa, “when managing the economy in a country like ours, you have to break away from ideological positions.” Ollanta agrees: “I don't believe in turning the problems of Latin America into ideological battles. We've been through that and it ended in bloody civil wars. What we need to do is solve the problems of inequality, illiteracy and malnutrition in Latin America. What does ideology have to do with that? It doesn't matter what color the cat, as long as it catches mice.” But as Žižek
points out, the denial of ideology is ideology at its purest. \textsuperscript{56} As if neoliberal capitalism wasn’t its own brand of ideology. Here we see the separation of base and ideal, of life and culture, which Artaud and so many others have lamented. The \textit{campesinos} fight for a revaluation of values, to reestablish the significance of the base: \textit{¡Agua si, Oro no!} Water yes, Gold no! Because you can’t eat gold!

The phantasy of eating gold wouldn’t be so strange in and of itself if it weren’t also a historical echo from 500 years ago, as depicted in Guaman Poma’s drawing of the first encounter between European and Inca: The ‘Spaniard’ Candia (he was in fact Greek) kneels before the Inca Wayna Qapaq, who offers him a dish filled with pieces of gold, asking him, “\textit{cay coritachu micunqui?}” (It is this gold that you eat?); Candia replies, “\textit{este oro comemos,}” (We eat this gold). \textsuperscript{57}

Eating gold is a key into the Andean imagination foregrounding the importance of eating and, even more, the importance of feeding and being fed. \textsuperscript{58} Andeans understood even the ideological fixations of the Spanish in terms of instinctual urges. Andean people are predominantly farmers and they relate to their gods in terms of eating as well. \textsuperscript{59} The Andean interpretation desublimates the Spanish, revealing the base nature which the Spanish repress, refuse to see, because it would be very troubling for their identity as enlightened Man. The Spanish can not admit to themselves that they are indeed filthy pigs feverish for a shiny yellow stone, but they are willing to play along in order to fool the Inca. \textsuperscript{60} The surreal image of eating gold captures the irrationality and unnaturalness\textsuperscript{61} of such a hunger, we might even call it a demonic hunger, the white man’s confusion of base drives and ideal drives, driven to satisfy ideological imperatives rather than his guts. The hierarchy of need gets flipped on its head. Michael Wood argues that the Inca found the Spanish obsession with gold as a commodity uncouth and even uncivilized. \textsuperscript{62} Wood tells us that “the
last of the great Incas, Manco himself, bitterly remarked, ‘Even if the snows of the Andes turned to gold still they would not be satisfied.”’ (11)

In the West, gold symbolizes the highest promise of civilization: wealth, power, perfection, and brilliance. By association, gold symbolizes the highest achievement of the spirit, the alchemist’s quest. But gold also has a dark side: obsessive, feverish, murderous greed. The corruption of the courts and media, the terrorism of the state, the contamination of the environment: it’s a nightmare. In Peru, this is known as the maldición del oro Inca [the curse of the Inca gold]. Far from the promise of wealth and progress, gold has brought nothing but poverty and misfortune. The wealth is not for Peru. Gold is not the progress it is supposed to be, in fact, it is completely the opposite.63

In the first instance, gold is the symbol of sublimation, moving toward intellect and abstraction. The condition seconde of gold is the irrationality it provokes as a stimulant of base desires, its essential desublimation. This is alchemy in reverse, turning gold back into shit. Eating gold is an image of this breakdown, equivalent to eating shit.64 Enacting the Corporation shows us that, in order to prove the safety of mining operations, there is the common practice among miners of licking, drinking and bathing in mine tailings, “covering their hands, faces, and arms with the mudlike substance.” (Welker, p. 163)

Christopher Columbus wrote from Jamaica in 1503: “Gold is a wonderful thing! Its owner is master of all he desires. Gold can even enable souls to enter Paradise.” This is an example of sublimation, as gold and paradise become synonymous. But in the words spoken by King Fernando of Spain in the 16th century we can see desublimation beginning to rear its mad head: “Obtain gold, humanly if it is possible, but at any cost, obtain gold.” Both idealization and bloody madness are the two sides of the Western rupture.65 The Inca prized gold as the sun itself, but with the
coming of the Spanish the value of gold changed from the sun to new suns [nuevos soles], from cosmic substance of aesthetic and religious value\(^66\) to primitive accumulation for the capitalist economy.\(^67\)

In her essay “The Sources and Meanings of Money,” Olivia Harris tells us that with the appearance of Western money the “values attached to collective interests and social ties are destroyed and replaced by accumulation for individual gain.”\(^{302}\) Money has been used by many “as a key signifier of European domination, of the rupture with the Andean past.”\(^{302}\) Money comes to represent rationality itself: “In the language of development and underdevelopment, those who fail, or refuse, to participate fully in the market, or who use their profits for religious expenditure rather than accumulation and investment, are seen as irrational.”\(^{303}\) Keep in mind that the protestants “outlawed festive expenditures.”\(^{299}\) Or consider Pedro Vargas, a mine owner in Republican Potosí, who wrote in 1864 that the Indian was an irrational being on account of his stubborn “resistance to the market.”\(^{68}\) Vargas claimed that “the Indian has no concept of accumulation, no idea of wealth.”\(^{259}\) The natives were notorious for their feasts in which libation after libation was poured, with greater and greater fervor, to all of their honored divinities: the Sun and Moon, the mountains and Pacha Mama, and also for the ‘devils’, the guardians and owners of “powerful, untamed places” such as lagoons, waterfalls, rivers, and mines.\(^{299 \& 312}\)

What do we make of these echoes in history? Ollanta’s betrayal echoes the founding betrayal of Francisco Pizarro who, after massacring thousands of Andean people and taking Inca king Atahualpa hostage, offered to release him for a ransom of 1 room filled with gold and 2 rooms filled with silver, but after he received the ransom, Pizarro nevertheless broke his promise and killed Atahualpa. Or what about the attack dogs which white invaders have been siccing on indigenous and black people for 524 years, the most recent example being against the Standing Rock
Sioux protestors. Repeating the same way that traumatic memories do. What do we make of these echoes of trauma and betrayal, these phantasies of eating gold? History moves in cycles of compulsive repetition: collective trauma, repression and outbreak. Just like hysterics, we suffer from split-identity (human/animal, male/female, adult/child, civilized/savage, sane/insane… etc.) As Nietzsche begins *Genealogy of Morals*: “we are unknown to ourselves, we men of knowledge.” This is the moment when the heart breaks. The cardiac mirror shatters. There is no longer recognition between Self and Other, there is only misrecognition.

“Because you don’t drink gold, you don’t eat gold but we drink water…”

Figure 1. 20
“cay coritachu micunqui?” (It is this gold that you eat?)
“este oro comemos.” (We eat this gold)
SHIT AND GOLD
“I beg of you my brothers, remain true to the earth!”
— Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra

One day I was up at the lagoons and had to have a bowel movement. The ‘outhouse’ was a hole dug in the ground with some plastic stretched over a wooden frame. As I was doing my ‘business’, I looked down at the formless multicolored splatterings and then suddenly I saw the words, “el sistema neolib” staring back at me from the shit. “Right where it belongs,” I thought to myself with a laugh. Somebody had wiped their ass with the Neoliberal System! Talk about poetic justice!
This is a magic image. It reveals the true nature of the system and of ourselves. We are born between urine and feces, as they say. I want you to ask yourself, which is more disgusting? Which is more degenerate? Human feces or an open pit gold mine? Shit, which fertilizes and turns back into Earth, is a part of ourselves we reject in order to make way for the higher activities of intellectual thought. Open Pit gold mines with giant holes 2km across and 1 km deep, filled with cyanid and mercury, will poison the Earth and make it uninhabitable for generations to come.

It is the repression of our basest natures which allows us to dominate Nature. In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud writes, “Anal eroticism…succumbs in the first instance to the ‘organic repression’ which paved the way to civilization.” (52)

Ferenczi, in a famous essay ‘On the Ontogenesis of the Interest in Money,’ derived money from the infantile impulse to play with feces, sublimated by the impingement, on this play impulse, of a repudiation of feces which he connects with the development of upright posture. Money is the end result. Ferenczi concludes, money is “nothing other than odorless dehydrated filth that has been made to shine. *Pecunia non olet.*”71 In this way, psychoanalysis shows us that, “money is derived from anal eroticism.”72

It is no coincidence that “the Protestant illumination came to Luther while seated on the privy.”73 As Norman O. Brown tells us, the Devil is the middle term, “connecting the privy with Protestantism on the one hand and capitalism on the other.”74 The Devil is anality materialized. For Luther the Devil is an encounter with something black and filthy, which departs leaving a horrible stench.75 “Twice at least Luther was assaulted by an apparition of the Devil ‘showing him his posterior.’”76 Norman O Brown writes, “As striking as the anality of the Devil’s attacks is the anality of Luther’s counterattacks.”77 Luther tells the Devil to “‘lick (or kiss) my posteriors’ or to ‘defecate in his pants and hang them round his neck,’ and threats to ‘defecate in his face’ or to
'throw him into my anus, where he belongs.'" This diabolism is then projected outward: "The whole world is possessed by Satan." "The world is the Devil and the Devil is the world." "Everything is full of devils, in the courts of princes, in houses, in fields, in streets, in water, in wood, in fire."" Max Weber drew the connection between the Protestant work-ethic and the spirit of Capitalism, which, as he put it, "turned with all its force against one thing: the spontaneous enjoyment of life and all it had to offer."(166) Norman O. Brown elaborated this point, finding an affinity between the psychoanalytical critique and the Marx of the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844. Sublimation (whose symbol is gold) is the crucial defense mechanism whereby sexual energy is desexualized and redirected towards new objects. We acquire a soul but at the price of the death of the body. The alienated consciousness is correlative with a money economy and the compulsion to work which subordinates humans to things: "It reduces the drives of the human being to greed and competition (aggression and possessiveness, as in the anal character). The desire for money takes the place of all genuinely human needs. Thus the apparent accumulation of wealth is really the impoverishment of human nature…""80 Freud also says we hold the dog in contempt precisely because it has no horror of excrement, even though its dominant sense is that of smell. I say, along with the dog philosopher Diogenes, "I have come to debase the coinage." When Plato spoke of Truth, Diogenes lifted his robe and took a shit. He’s also said to have masturbated in the public square. Campesinos are shit to the dominant culture. They’re caricatured on prime time television as dirty, stupid and backward. Of course they’re dirty, they work in the dirt! Rather then deny these prejudices against the peasantry, we should revalue them. What is education? What is progress? What is wealth? What is poverty? These are the questions which the campesinos of Peru are
being forced to ask themselves. Water or Gold? They’ve made their decision: ¡Agua si, Oro no!

Keeping in mind the national slogan of Peru (“Peru: progress for all”), we begin to realize the profundity of such a shift in values. If the relentless march towards progress is actually a catastrophe which, as Walter Benjamin writes, “keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage,” then backwardness becomes our only hope.

If the sublimation of our instincts is the founding act of repression which makes way for civilization and enlightenment, then desublimation holds the key to our redemption. Consider this image as a curse: Go back! Go back to where you came from! A shock of recognition returns us to our own base natures. As the miners dig into the bowels of the Earth for that precious metal which in their minds ensures their status among the Masters, they’re fantasizing about commodities and maximizing utility, and yet, at base they too are driven by an extremely primitive desire, namely the fascination with gold.

**WHITE VAMPIRES**

I would like now to turn to an Andean phantasm which embodies the local’s fears of those white exploiters who extract wealth from their lands and bodies. The *pishtaco* or *nakaq* as it is known in other parts of Peru, and the *karisiri* in Bolivia, is a monstrous pale-skinned man which can turn into a black dog and sucks fat from people it encounters on desolate night roads. The *pishtaco* has a long history in Latin America, beginning with two conquistadors, Bernal Diaz in Mexico and Hernando de Soto in Peru, who reported healing their battle wounds with the fat of Indians slain in combat. Forty years later, in 1571, the Catholic priest Cristobal de Molina wrote how “Spain had commanded that Indian body fat be amassed and exported for the curing of a
certain illness there,” which spurred Taqui Ongoy or the Dancing Sickness uprising.85 A rebel document from the time of Tupac Amaru states that district governors “come to suck and take advantage of blood and sweat.”86 Spanish missionaries were believed to kill Indians for fat, thereafter oiling churchbells to make them specially sonorous87 or shining the faces of the statues of the saints.88 “During the 19th century, in the early years of the Republic, pishtacos became prosperous miners or merchants who wanted the fat of the indigenous body to make soaps.”89 Similar beliefs held that sugar mill machinery needed human fat as grease90 or that jet aircraft engines could not start without a squirt of human fat.91 Modern versions of the story take place on public buses, where the pishtaco will first sedate their prey and then suck the person’s fat out with the aid of a little machine, needles and tubes. In 2009 the pishtaco legend was cited by Peruvian police to explain a gang murdering up to 60 people, “supposedly to harvest their fat,” they said, to be “sold for thousands of dollars in the European black market supplying the cosmetics industry.”92

In the Andes, fat is the symbol and the essence of wealth, strength, and life itself, calling back to Viracocha, the creator deity whose name means, “Fat of the Sea.” Viracocha’s name also displays the prevalence of Andean dualism, combining ocean and sacrificial fire. Fat is a key ritual component, especially llama fat in mesas [altars] and pagos [offerings] to Pacha Mama and Apus. Fat is also used in sorcery.93

One night while we were sitting around in the plaza de armas of Cajamarca these faded and blurred photocopied signs appeared, plastered on the telephone poles. “Se Busca Moustro” [looking for Monster] followed by a common enough name, “Wilfredo Gaucho Bustamante”. The word ‘Monster’ was misspelt but when people read it out loud they said, “Monstruo” so we knew it meant ‘Monster.’ I wondered if “Moustro” subconsciously connected to Mou Zedong and a fear
of communist inspired terrorists like the Shining Path? I asked a few Peruvian friends if they knew anything:

“The Monster they say.”

“That the young take care, especially the women because a monster has appeared that rapes and after it rapes them, it cuts their face … leaves them disfigured.” I was astounded, my friends had heard it on the radio and seen it on the T.V. “That means it’s something real.” People spoke of cries in the night in a nearby ravine. A local student said that “her papa had seen it and he shot it and it had done nothing, the bullet.” A disbelieving professor mocked us, “It’s the Antichrist ya…Es el mismo demonio.” [It’s the Devil himself!]” I kept asking what it could change into. “They say that suddenly they see it as a person and later it transforms into an animal.”

“Into whatever animal.”
“Like a fox, something like that and sucks the blood of animals.”
“It changes also into whatever person, into Santiago, it can change into whatever person.”

I suggested that perhaps it was from the mine. Without missing a beat Flor says, “I don’t know but those of the mine they go to suck blood, bueno I have not seen it, I’ve heard it that they suck the dogs, the sheep, the bulls…everything they say di? This I have heard… And the professor Raquel says in Parapukio they have woken up with their animals dead but they don’t know what it is that killed them.”

The pishtaco marks a transformation of values, from an economy of sacrifice to an economy of colonial exploitation and now neocolonial industrial extraction. The market collides with the idea of reciprocity between people and with nature. The pishtaco is the form sacrifice takes after conquest, once it becomes alienated from itself and “reverses its aspect”, in the sense of Freud’s uncanny. The pishtaco only takes, he gives nothing back except a death that is non-regenerative. The pishtaco and the mine are the death of death, the exchange that ends all exchange, the
pure negativity of ecocide, while the excessive hunger and cataclysmic overflowings of the Earth Mother are potentially messianic in nature. Remember this piece of folk wisdom, “placenta fragments can be used to protect oneself from certain characters that solitarily roam seeking human fat.”(41)

“We are all nakaqs.”94 We are the white vampires. We are all implicated, every time we burn up fossil fuel, twirl the gold rings on our fingers or answer our gold laden smart phones. Of course it’s a slow burning death on the installment plan, but little by little we are complicit in the sacrifice of the earth to the new god of capital. Cyanide leach pads appear as bleeding mountains, step pyramids to the religion of New Suns.95

Many scholars agree96 “humble people, regular and anonymous men and women, children and elderly resist the attack of the pishtacos and even kill them.”97 The Guardians of the Lagoons were such folk heroes.
“Looking for Monster…”
EXPERIENCE AS METHOD

“It is true we love life; not because we are wont to live, but because we are wont to love. There is always some madness in love. But there is always, also, some method in madness.”

—Thus Spake Zarathustra

Is the method section where I talk about how I wore campesino clothing (poncho, sombrero, llanques, alforja...), learned dirty jokes, danced around chanting in the marches, won 2nd place in the international coca ball chewing contest, played a shaman on a float during Carnaval giving offerings to the lagoons and cursing the miners and police in Quechua? How I got detained by the police for 6 hours, eventually leading to a prohibition against my entering the country? What about how my dancing and exuberance won me the nickname Lic Lic [a bird of the highland lagoons]? How we’d sit around for hours chewing coca at endless meetings upon meetings, drinking cañaso and smoking cigaros. Or how we were often followed, strangers taking pictures of us in the street. Atuq wondering if his house was bugged, taking very round-about ways home to outsmart the police or whoever may or may not have been following us. Atuq would turn to me and say, “the night is heavy” or “las cosas estan movidos” meaning something was afoot, we better be careful, he had a bad feeling. Or how Atuq would finish a story while he was sitting on the toilet.

I can attest to the chaos of experience. Scribbling in notebooks, inside covers of books and on scraps of paper I’d invariably lose. Stories I heard over and over, as well as overheard stories, sometimes only fragments of stories and what seemed to be infinite variants. I’m not sure if you understand: I was compulsively scribbling down everything I heard, saw and thought, mixing together advertisements, a shard of overheard speech, drawings, an erotic memory, and so-called ‘fieldwork.’ After all, I took the parting advice of my committee members to heart. John Pember- ton told me to “listen for the insignificant”, and Val Daniel told me with urgency and passion,
“The only thing left for anthropology to do is subvert the academy…” a dramatic pause, then with a sweeping gesture of both arms, “the primitive is all around us.” I honestly can’t tell where the field begins and where it ends.

One time Atuq was telling me how he was the Secretary of Organization in the P.I.C. and his wife looked over with a laugh, “you mean secretary of disorganization.” This became a sort of mantra for us: “We don’t plan anything! The police, the intelligence service, they don’t know how the actions of the lucha come about. The people themselves don’t know how it’s done. Tell ‘em, ‘I think there are supernatural forces.’ Tell ‘em, ‘the earth herself is who’s in charge, the leaders and the pueblo don’t organize nothing,’ Tell ‘em, ‘I think the lagoons themselves are who’s in charge of organizing… and it works out perfect!’” Eventually I settled on songs, dreams, jokes and stories as basic categories, forms of the dreamweapon, to organize the chaos of experience. Organize chaos? That’s how Chaos died, according to Chuang Tzu. Do I contradict myself? Very well, then I contradict myself. The dilemma is not unlike the one Bataille found himself in. 98 I refused to let these contradictions restrict my flow. Everywhere we went, we went singing and dancing. As Deleuze says, “What are we doing in philosophy? We're looking for ‘vitality.’” 99 To be honest, this was my method (if there was any method at all): innocence, experience, playing the fool, following the spark of spirit/affect, suerte (fate/luck), spontaneity and improvisation. 100

I heard the revolution of the world was coming, that the Mama Pacha was gathering her children together, her warriors, to protect her against the miners and all that would destroy her. For this I believe that, alongside the often heard cry to ‘raise consciousness’, it is also a matter of raising the unconscious, that is, unleashing the wild, unconscious forces of desire and phantasy which are the mythological forces of prehistory. My ultimate thesis is that, in our age of the death of the planet, the endgame of industrial capitalism, experience itself is an act of revolt, or it ceases
to be experience. If experience is even possible any longer, it must take the form of a transgression of that “atrophy of experience”\textsuperscript{101} which is the norm. Such experience is a powerful spiritual weapon in the \textit{lucha}.

The resistance in Cajamarca emerges out of peasant experience and a sense of dignity for their ways of life. Pretty early on I decided to focus on specific people, people who radiated \textit{mana} or spirit power, people who seemed to incarnate the resistance: Eriberto, Máxima, Daniel, and Atuq. They have stared death in the face: “freedom must go through the putting at stake of life”.\textsuperscript{102} It is in this regard that they are aglow with the radiance of sovereignty, even if, or especially when they face impossible odds.

Atuq would joke how when I go back to my professors, who in some retellings would become the CIA, they’d ask, “so what’d you learn?” I’d tell them a few jokes, “Green \textit{lucuma}.” “Why?” “Because milk comes out your ass!” “What does one ball say to another ball?” “What?” “Better come listen for yourself!” and I’d grab one of their heads and pull it down toward my crotch. They’d be furious, “You only brought back \textit{that} shit!?!?” Then I’d show them a \textit{vinsa}, a dried twisted bull penis which is the characteristic instrument of punishment and symbol of the \textit{ronderos} and they’d ask, ‘but what type of leather is it made from?’ I’d tell them it was made from the penis of a man from Celendín. They’d be impressed, “Wow look at the dicks of the \textit{Shilicos}!” So all the professors would fly in an airplane to Celendín to get fucked by the Shilicos. But when they get there they’ll see the Shilico dicks and say, “that little thing is all you got?” And the Shilicos would say, “\textit{ya pues}, they’re getting smaller with all the pollution.” So then all the professors will help fight against the mine so that the Shilico dicks grow big again.

Even after being there for two years it was not unthinkable for someone to turn to me and say, “You’re not a spy are you?” I’d often answer that I was a spy for the Pacha Mama: “I’m
reporting directly to her so watch out!” The peasants had no protocol for determining who to let into the movement, so there was constant paranoia. Pro-miners slandered me on the internet, for example putting a picture of me on Facebook with a caption that read: “wolf in sheep’s clothing.”

Atuq’s way of dealing with this was his usual exuberant irreverence, “Ba! if he’s a spy, let ‘em take the information! Let ‘em take it to his bosses at Newmont and the CIA! Let ‘em spy on us!” his deep voice laughing, “They’re not gunna learn shit! We don’t know what the fuck we’re gunna do until we do it. You want to spy? Good! Go tell your bosses we say, CONGA NO VA!”

When I told my father that I was writing a section on ‘methodology,’ he immediately said, ‘Oh, you mean statistics.’ My father went for his Ph.D. in Sociology but never finished. But is anything ever finished? Method? What method? To impose order on chaos, reason on phantasm? But in ethnographic surrealism, or “mythical anthropology” as Bataille called it, the only method is phantasmic experience itself, experience divested of both meaning and goal. It is the experience of chaos which appeared to me as absurdity\textsuperscript{103} or pure psychic automatism, as Breton put it, or the Comte de Lautréaumont: “As beautiful as the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operating table.” That’s fieldwork! ¡choque!

One must grasp the meaning from the inside.
   They are not logically demonstrable.
   One must live experience.\textsuperscript{104}

Georges Bataille says that experience is the sole value and the sole authority: “This supposes the negation of the authorities, the existing values which limit the possible.” (7) Experience often takes the form of anguish. He says, “Experience itself has torn me to shreds.” (7) Bataille’s experience is close to what is called mystical experience (states of ecstasy, of rupture, of meditation) but he is thinking less of confessional experience than of experience laid bare, free of ties, even of an origin (3). Experience responds to the necessity he finds within himself, and human
existence along with him, of challenging everything, of putting everything into question (3). He wants experience to lead where it will, not to some end point given in advance (3). In this regard, he must leave knowledge, discourse\textsuperscript{105}, rationality and identity far behind, for they are essentially reactive, they hold experience back. Nonknowledge is the principle of experience. This is because, for Bataille, knowledge enslaves us (129). Likewise, “the development of intelligence leads to a drying up of life… Intelligence has destroyed the authority necessary for experience.” (8) Only by affirming that ‘inner experience itself is authority’ do we emerge from this impotence. But Bataille is quick to add: all authority expiates itself: “From that moment, this answer calmed me, barely leaving me (like a scar of a wound long in closing) a residue of anguish.” (8)

“When I speak of nonknowledge now, I mean essentially that I know nothing, and that if I am still talking, it is essentially insofar as I have a knowledge that brings me to nothing.”\textsuperscript{106}

When Bataille says, echoing the negative theology of Christian mystics, “That which I have seen eludes understanding”, it could just as easily be a statement about my experience of fieldwork. This throws the goals of anthropology into question. The unknown overturns everything within us like a violent wind (5). The unknown demands sovereignty without partition (5), or as Derrida says, \textit{hospitality without reserve}. It seems to me that the other as sovereign must be the foundation of anthropology, religion, ethics and environmentalism. And yet, as Nietzsche pointed out, the meaning of knowledge for the average person and the natural sciences alike is this: “Something strange is to be reduced to something familiar.”\textsuperscript{107} In contrast to the natural sciences which seek to drag the unknown into the known, the shadows into the light of reason, what Nietzsche calls the \textit{unnatural} sciences\textsuperscript{108} would be a renegade science seeking to enter into the unknown and, through estrangement, become other.
Each life is a vortex amid other vortexes, a streaming of electricity, an incessant surging forth, a passage of warmth, a fleeting play of light. “Oneself” is not the subject isolating itself from the world, but a place of communication” (9). “Communication can not be authority but only experience” (179). For Bataille, experience and communication are a double sided mirror leading to a fusion of the subject and the object. Bataille’s communication is not what we commonly understand the word to mean: “Experience is in the first place a struggle against the spell in which useful language holds us.” Bataille’s communication slips beyond the limits of the isolated ego. In his *Discussion on Sin*, Bataille states: “Communication happens only between two beings at risk.” (29) Risk is due to the inordinate expenditures of energy which shatter the limit of being: “Full communication is comparable to flames, to the electrical discharge of lightening. What is attractive in it is the rupture that it establishes… the moment of violent contact, when life slips from one person to another, in a feeling of magical subversion.” In this way, I saw the songs, dreams, jokes and stories of the peasants as forms of charged communications from the other, a dreamweapon all the more powerful because it issues from their experience… as peasants! Precisely what the enemy has tried to exterminate over the last 500 years. The peasants fight not only for their lives but with their lives.

Bataille is terrified of being enclosed in his self “as in the depths of a tomb” (61). Lest we mistake Bataille’s focus on experience for solipsism, egoism or individualism, remember his insistence about others: “inner experience is conquest and as such for others!…I only do it for others!” The subject in experience in spite of everything remains consciousness of others “and, as the ancient chorus, the witness, the popularizer of the drama, it loses itself in human communication; as subject, it is thrown outside of itself, beyond itself; it ruins itself in an undefined throng of
possible existences.” (60-61) A truer description of my sense of fieldwork and the type of ethnography that I wanted to write could never be made: “This anguish which wounds you— it is necessary that it tear you apart even more so that you communicate it to your fellow beings. You must go to the public square and shout it out.”  

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2. ERIBERTO AND ANDEAN UTOPIA

Figure 2.1
I remember meeting Eriberto in the plaza de armas of Cajamarca. More appropriately, he remembered me. He gave me a kind greeting and a brotherly embrace. We sat up late into the night, huddled together in the plaza whispering of old, forgotten things.

“Honestly”, he said, “just about everything ya, about Pacha Mama, about the Apus, about Tayta Inti [Father Sun], has almost been lost no? Here, in Cajamarca though, I still carry the tradition of cultivating the land, the value left to us by our ancestors. I still believe. For me, they’re my gods. From very early on I’ve dedicated myself to rescuing, to valuing the tradition they left us— the beliefs, the myths and the legends— even till now, and I’ll always continue cultivating and valuing that no? The Apus for me are sacred. They’re blessed, because the Apu is the one that maintains the watersheds, no? And, thanks to the Apus, the rivers exist, the springs, the puquios, the lagoons. I’ve been talking with a group of young people, raising their awareness, encouraging them to continue rescuing our tradition. Ya we’ve done the pago in worship of our Apus. We will continue to do these cults, these pagos, as our ancestors the Incas did no? And always in payment for what the waters give to us. Like in Pacha Mama no? In Pacha Mama, we live within her no? So, essentially, if Pacha Mama didn’t exist, we wouldn’t be able to exist. So, for me, my principal god is Pacha Mama, because, in her, from the moment someone comes into the world, he comes here, he rests within her. It’s enough to cultivate here no? You put down a seed. Then Pacha Mama brings it forth. So, in essence, you live in her, eat from her, sleep in her. Everything, no? She provides you with everything. But many people never do anything to save Pacha Mama. They only use her. They don’t know how to give her importance, care for her, how to manage her, no? We try to destroy her. So this, for me, is a sin they’re committing against our Pacha Mama. Ya we’re really hurting our Pacha Mama. We’re attacking her. There will come a moment when, little by little, things will begin to degenerate. We have to do something to save Pacha Mama.”

Eriberto continued to tell me about Tayti Inti, Father Sun, “he gives us the light of day. He keeps time…” and Illapa, the thunderbolt, “who destroys the evil people that are ruining the Pacha Mama.” He said the Caxamarcas were the first culture before the Incas that were here in Cajamarca. The blood of the Caxamarcas mixed with the Incas. With the arrival of the Spaniards, again there was this mixture of races: “But, I believe that we still have greater proportion of our own blood…” Then Eriberto launched into a story about an experience he had with the Apus:

I would go out during the nighttime when I was young, around the age of 9 or 10, I would go to the Apus, no? I liked to play the wind instruments, like my antara, my quena. I would dedicate poems, inspired songs to the Apus, to Pacha Mama. And
so, when I felt that strength coming to me from the Apus, I felt that it strengthened me and came into my body, no? They picked me up... ehhh, how do I tell you? ya like a dying person, you see. That strength of the Apus shocked me. For a week I was sick, sick. But the Apu itself healed me. Inside Conga, we have the Apu la Picota which is a marvelous Apu, an enchanter, it contains the medicinal herbs. So, when I was ya enchanted in the Apu, they went out and collected medicinal herbs from the Apu and they gave these same plants to me, and so this strength passed to me, and from then on I was born strengthened by the Apu. Always, up to this day, I make this cult. Till now I carry this strength. That is a pago I have received, in turn for my pagos that I make to my Apus no? That experience was the only time I was sick. For something like 20 years, I haven’t had any illnesses. The one illness I’ve had in my life was the strength of the Apus. I will never desist in my worship. Even now, on moon lit nights, on dark nights, I go into the open air. Or when I’m home, I go up to the roof and sing, offering poems, words to the Apus, to the moon, to the night, all of nature. Here, for example, this poem is called, “Your Sadness”

It was an unforeseen evening,
   sad, overcast,
together with your sad look,
you to me, so sad
Wiracocha ya hid himself.

   The night arrived,
The night arrived and still
your sadness scolds me
with that naive and
abrupt change of
nature.

   Dazzling and placid
   the beautiful night
   in the immense darkness
   so sad
   I light my way
   with a star.

When the Quilla shines I give her words, I go to speak with the night, the moon. It’s something I do, and so, this moves me, leads me to continue creating and perform cults like this. For example, sometimes I go where there is a lot of vegetation and submerge myself inside the leaves of the trees and I talk with them no? with the plants and rocks. Or sometimes I go out to walk, relax myself and refresh myself in the moon lit night, and I feel so good, so nice. Sometimes I go to the cold waters of the lagoons and submerge myself in the dawn, how you feel that it relaxes you, un-stresses you, the cold waters no? You feel something like this, this is important, the best way to live with nature. When I make these gestures I feel empowered, calm.
And when I don’t make these gestures towards nature, I begin to feel sad, restless no? I feel that nature herself, that Mama Pacha is calling for me to do this kind of cult, of sacrifice, no? I had a beautiful experience on one occasion when I ventured to make the cult to the Sun. I made a sacrifice, I burned a small *animalito*. It was a sheep, a little lamb. The very small offspring of a sheep for him, yielding the cult to the Sun and to Pacha Mama. And so I saw, and I gained the Strength with the sacrifice of my soul and my being.”
THE ABSENCE OF MYTH

It is strange that Eriberto should speak so ardently of Pacha Mama in current day Cajamarca. The Spanish largely uprooted such beliefs. Eriberto may be one of the last people in Cajamarca who is still in touch with the old ways. But, of course, there are those who do not articulate their feelings in the appropriate discourse of Apus and Pacha Mama, peasants such as Máxima and Jaime, who nevertheless still professed an elemental bond with Nature. They heard the mountains calling to each other at night, have relatives that were almost seduced and stolen away by duendes, trust in the prophetic force of their dreams, know to beware of the lagoons, remain faithful to the passing of a cuy over a sick individual and know which ‘heavy’ places to avoid at the mala hora [evil hour]. Trying to distinguish whether they are Indian or mestizo is missing the point. As if there were a clear dividing line which existed objectively. People seem to forget that whatever divisions exist have been seared into flesh from a brutal history of conquest. Mestizo or Indio was just another mechanism of separation and thus domination, though many people in the resistance turned the values around and proudly proclaimed themselves Indians, which for them was synonymous with being a campesino.

In certain respects, Andean culture was making a comeback. Quechua classes were offered at the Belen church as part of an effort to resuscitate Cajamarca’s roots. A dutch woman began an art-education project called Huarmayo for schools in Chamis and other towns where children were taught to perform offerings to the Earth, though some criticized the pagos for being more of a European fantasy than actually what locals considered as their roots.

Then there are those who pay lip service to Andean beliefs for commercial profit, what we might call the commodification of the sacred. The tourist industry takes over the work of archeology. A bus company names itself Atahualpa, an avenue is named Manco Capac, costumes of Inca
and Kuntur Wasi stream by during the Carnaval parades, a neon yellow soda is named Inca Kola, a disco tech is named Raymi Wasi. Or consider the statues of the 14 Inca outside the ‘Great Qhapaq Ñan’ Complex’ which includes a new ‘multi-use’ coliseum. The tasks of implementation and equipment (chairs, gigantic screens, lights, sound, etc.), will be under the charge of the Association Los Andes of Cajamarca (ALAC), organism of Yanacocha mining, with an investment of 1.5 million dollars. Experts call Qhapaq Ñan Complex’ “the gravitational center” of the growth of the city. To me it all amounts to a recuperation of the sacred, indoctrination through identity formation.

There were many strange moments which made me question the presence of the sacred in hearts of the Cajamarquinos. Take, for example, the Cult of Water in the town of Chamis sponsored by the Provincial Municipality of Cajamarca, the central event of which is a pago to the water, held as spectacle to a gawking audience of 2000 people. All the authorities came up to join the Shaman: the Mayor of Cajamarca, the director of Tourism, Chief of Police and others. All line up, smile, flash flash, everybody gets a cigarette. “Down in front!” the mamitas in sombreros wrapped in blankets held with large safety pins yell at the camera men, throwing pebbles or clods of dirt at them.

Then there was the pago that the Guardians did on Earth Day up at the Azul lagoon, inside the Conga mining project. But, the problem was, hardly anyone knew what a pago was! Milton had to get up in front of everyone, with wave upon wave of the Azul Lagoon shimmering behind him, and explain, otherwise, as he said later, “people would have suspected devil worship.” Daniel Gil and Máxima were asked to lead the pago. I was astounded to hear Daniel end with the Lord’s Prayer.
Then there was the young lawyer Zulma Villa from the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights who was brought to Cajamarca by the National President of the Rondas Campesinas. She spent two days educating the peasants about their indigeneity. Afterwards, the peasants from Cajabamba circled her, asking for help with yet another mining conflict. She reviewed the questions. Number 1: “Are you descended from a population which existed before the Conquest? Who was there before?” she asks them.

“The Hacendados.” My eyes grow wide in disbelief. The haciendas! Laughing inside at their innocence, their ununderstanding, giving the exact wrong answer.

“No, no what culture?” she rattles becoming irritated.

And without missing a beat, in pure comic genius, one answers quick as lightening, “Agriculture pues.”

Stifled uproar. She proceeds to ask them question 2, (“Do you preserve any institutions, in whole or in part? Do you retain the language? The traditional clothing? Religion? Festivals?”) and when they can’t name one damned institution that they preserve, she delves back into the cancer metaphor: “If a person has cancer in their arm, and it is amputated, do they continue to be a person?” The peasants hesitantly nod. “And if the cancer spreads to the other arm and it too is amputated, nevertheless, is he still a person?” “Sí” a few pipe up. “And let’s say the cancer moves to a leg also, and it needs to be cut off, he’s still a person, right?” “Sí,” everyone now says in unison. “You all are like that” she says, “some of you have lost an arm, some of you have lost two arms, some of you have lost two arms and a leg, but you continue to be indigenous people. I mean, some of you have lost the language, others the clothing, others the religion, yet you retain the rondas! Indigenous law is like anticuchos [fried meat on a stick], piece by piece, but it adds up.” I guess this is called identity politics.
I told Mirtha Vasquez about this humorous misunderstanding and she told me about an incident when Zulma tried to convince Milton that he was indigenous: “The face he made! It was an honest face, thinking, ¿siiiiiiii? Seriously, me? Am I indigenous?’ Trying to find himself no? I died laughing…” Mirtha said it came down to how a person feels: “I can feel for our ancestors and one has to respect that we are part of this indigenous, ancient culture and we need to rescue this but the fact is that we have lost this bond so strongly, for so much time, that you can not impose it on yourself again simply because they tell you to. You have to feel it again, you have to begin to work at it. I have to rescue my ancestors in order to revalue myself, to feel myself. If they impose it on you, you’re not going to feel it, and if you don’t feel it, you won’t defend it.” Mirtha emphasized that neither can people deny the hispanic elements that were imposed on the population because they formed part of the new culture. “If you go to the peasants and say, ‘but your patron saint is a product of alienation,’ they’ll corner you and say, ‘this is mine, this is how my parents raised me,’ and these same people speak to you of their rivers, of their Apus, mountains no? There is a mixture and you can’t deny either of the two heritages. We feel, all the Cajamarquinos, that we are a rare mixture of those two things, of the Andean and the Western. Many things surprise you, for example, if you go to Churgur, they look like Europeans, all the blonde children with white skin and blue eyes no? it’s impressive.” She told me that, before the Spanish and the Inca, the proper culture of Cajamarca was the Cuismancos. The Inca “disappeared” the great quantity of the indigenous. Those that remained alive, they dispersed throughout the empire. Then they repopulated Cajamarca with Incas. The Spanish arrived and finished exterminating the majority of the population. “So this remained a depopulated territory, all of Cajamarca.” The Spanish once again repopulated the land, bringing poor peasants, gypsies, Basques, Jews and criminals.

“There is a mixture of everything here. And this is the new culture which is born in Cajamarca. If you ask yourself, what is the culture proper? From where
does it proceed? We come from the evolution of all this mixture. That’s why I find it funny when they want to say, ‘You have to value the indigenous and strengthen only the indigenous,’ because they need to recognize that here, this is a new culture that has been greatly influenced by other cultures! It’s a new thing that was born! It’s a hybrid of everything!”

THE FIGHT FOR QUILISH

Here our conversation swerved to the lucha. Eriberto sighed, “I’m fed up with talking of these topics, of corruption, of the abuses caused by this Yanacocha mine or Newmon mining corporation. Frankly, it is terrible, disastrous, we as Cajamarquinos... as campesinos no?…” he paused and took a glance over his shoulder, then he continued, “I think it was in 2001 more or less when a group of senators and Yanacocha wanted to borrow a loan from the World Bank in order to exploit Quilish. Then the Cajamarquina population found out and chose to protest and to rise up. The pueblo of Cajamarca rose up and there were confrontations with the police and peasants were assaulted.” These were the massive uprisings in the defense of Cerro Quilish which shook Cajamarca from 2001-2004. As the origin of both the Rio Grande and Rio Porcón, Quilish supplies the city of Cajamarca with 70% of its drinking water (not to mention, for 9000 peasants of nearby communities, Quilish supplies 100% of their water). Quilish also contains a projected 4.2 million ounces of gold. In 2000, the city of Cajamarca declared Quilish a reserved zone, in an attempt to protect it from mining. Yanacocha twice appealed to the Judicial Power, losing both times. In the third instance of appeal, the Constitutional Tribunal made a questionable ruling that gave way to an Environmental Impact Study, thus opening the mountain to mining exploitation. In July 2001, the Provincial Municipality of Cajamarca, which was being hard pressed by citizen mobilizations, formed the Multisectoral Commission for Environmental and Socioeconomic Impacts of Mining in Cajamarca. Promptly, the Multisectoral Commission was backed by more than 35 social
organizations in urban and rural bases, several civil institutions and local NGOs. On August 28 of 2001, there was a march of thousands of urban dwellers and peasants to Quilish. Farmers planted hundreds of stakes of *sauco* in the reserved zone (the stakes were painted with the national colors), while others hoisted the Peruvian flag at the summit of the mountain.119 This is an excerpt from the homily delivered by Father Arana on top of Cerro Quilish on August 28, 2001.

“Men and women are always in danger of idolizing gold, wealth and power. We manufacture gods with our hands, we put gold above the value of life itself. In this context, Quilish is only a few tons of gold. They don't care if it is the mountain on which the *campesinos* have always placed offerings to protect their *chacras*, the quantity and purity of their waters, or the administration of justice itself. Quilish, for the *campesinos* here still is the Apu, the protector mountain of all terrestrial and celestial life. Pantheistic paganism, might say those who do not understand that the relation with nature is for the *campesinos* the delicate thread on which all life is sustained. They think that the water is fabricated by the bottlers San Luis, San Carlos or Socosani, and not by the prodigal Mother Nature in whom God put everything necessary for men and women to live in dignity.”

This homily provoked the ire of the mining company. In local media, the mine accused Marco Arana of being a “false prophet” and a “promoter of pantheistic ideas.” A discourse of Andean sacredness was thus an important part of the Quilish resistance, though some have questioned the authenticity of these beliefs. I heard gossip that the declaration of sacredness of Quilish was nothing more then an ‘invention,’ a strategy of anti-mining leaders, not a lived reality for the majority of protestors. Yet the binary opposition between authentic indigenous tradition and invented (fraudulent) interpretation is itself a symptom of the same racist logic which seeks to distinguish between *indios* and *mestizos.*120 What made Arana’s declaration of Quilish as an Apu so radical was that he conceptually exploded this division between savage and civilized, ancient and modern, nature and society, fusing both scientific and religious perspectives in his defense of the mountain. As Fabiana writes:
“This is the irony of Cerro Quilish: that its protagonism as an Apu took shape in a region where many people have turned to evangelism and where a Catholic priest became one of its most important spokespersons. It took a proposed mining project—with the threat of open pits, toxic chemicals and altered water courses to make the latent ‘indigeneity’ of Porcón and people's relationships to a sentient landscape politically visible and significant in the present.”

In an article titled “The Defense of Cerro Quilish: A Romantic Question?”, Marco Arana refutes the critics of local media which attack his “religious, romantic, mythic, subjective and even ideological” vision: “They say, on the contrary, that environmental issues associated with Quilish are exclusively of a technical and scientific character. I and many others defend Quilish simply because it’s an Apu, which as these voices say, is unacceptable.” Nevertheless, Arana first defends Quilish as a source of water for many Cajamarquinos, citing hydrological statistics, but then he switches gears, “Quilish has other meanings in the collective traditional campesino imaginary.”

As a rural priest, Arana saw how the peasants treated Quilish. They made little altars of rocks and would bring “holy water, liquor, peppers, salt, candles, strands of lamb’s wool or little pieces of leather.” As Arana writes, “They prayed first to God Almighty, Father of Jesus Christ, and then came the libations and offerings to the earth with trickles of water.” The peasants told that if the “first clouds of October appear above the crown of Quilish, it would be a year of heavy rains and bountiful harvests.” According to Arana, the peasants have always known that Quilish possessed both gold and water. He heard stories of a ‘golden fountain’ from which water flowed in two directions, which Arana notes, is an “apt description of Quilish’s location on the continental divide separating the watersheds that drain into the Pacific and Atlantic oceans.” Arana admits that, for the miners, all these stories are nothing but superstition and “peasant ignorance which modernity must overcome.” Then Arana asks the fateful question: “Therefore, who knows more? City-dwellers? Journalists with their mouths hanging open for modernity and borne by the wallet of Yanacocha? Some university professor that dusts off his positivist thesis as if science and technology were
not subject to cultural paradigms.” He reminds “the ‘little disciples’ of Augusto Comte, father of positivism”, that “absolute or pure scientific objectivity does not exist, even scientific knowledge is nothing other than a social construction”, “The most profound scientific objectivity does not ignore the cultural, subjective, ideological and even religious weight of the milieu of the researcher himself.”

It is with Quilish that Cajamarca woke up and the terms of the struggle changed. No longer was it a struggle to nationalize the mines or for better pay and working conditions, as in other parts of Peru.122 With the recognition of Quilish as both an aquifer and an Apu, the resistance became a struggle for life itself. This is when the cries of “Water Yes, Gold No” were first heard in Cajamarca, shaking the city to its foundations.

The Quilish conflict culminated in September of 2004 when a departmental-wide general strike brought Yanacocha’s mining operations to a halt. Tens of thousands of protestors blocked the road to the mine, holding it for two weeks. The mine was forced to ferry supplies and staff by helicopter.123 “As many would later remark, the defense of Cerro Quilish united the city and the countryside.”124 Municipal leaders, SUTEP, transportation workers, irrigation canal user’s associations, Rondas Campesinas, religious organizations and students, among others, made various road blockages using large boulders and their own bodies. The police responded with tear gas, rubber bullets and ruthless attacks.125 At the peak of the 15 days of protesting, more then 10,000 people filled the plaza de armas of Cajamarca. Finally the investors suspended the project. Yanacocha relented, issuing an unprecedented public apology126 and in 2009 Newmont mining announced a commitment to the principle of free, prior and informed consent.127
PRIVATE REPRESSION

Eriberto continues, “In the end, there were our leaders. We had Isidro Llanos, Gomer Vargas, father Marco Arana who also joined in these Quilish protests. Finally some of them escaped and others, for example Don Isidro Llanos and ‘mano’ Becerra, were killed by the men of FORZA, an institution which follows people through their intelligence service. They took pictures of people and the leaders and they do the following no?” Eriberto took another furtive glance over his shoulder. Melancholic music spread through the night air, covering the plaza in a morbid and intoxicating hymn. Undecipherable words submerged in the fuzz and noise of the loud speakers. Then the electric church bells tolled. Behind us the stone facade of the San Francisco church gleamed in golden hued lights. The ornate, colonial carvings were the crowning feature of this baroque golden temple built upon the Inca ‘House of the Serpent’ with stones taken from the sacred hill which today goes by the name of Santa Apolonia. Santa Apolonia once was home to a great huaca but now a large white Cross beams out over the city. Eriberto told me that on two different occasions, lightening has struck and knocked down that Cross. Santa Apolonia is also where the ‘Seat of the Inca’ is located, the place from which the Inca supposedly addressed his subjects. It seemed fitting that next door to San Francisco stood the sanctuary of the Virgin of Sorrows, the patron saint of Cajamarca. I looked at the fountain in the center of the plaza, the spot where they say Atahualpa was executed. Eriberto turned to me quickly, speaking in a low voice, “See that man there, he’s a spy,” shooting his eyes towards a shadowy figure leaning against a tree on the other side of the plaza.

“To Isidro Llanos they did this following, in the end, they went to his house, two guys in ponchos arrived there. Found him, he was giving grass to his cattle. These men arrived, asking for the whereabouts of another man no? Isidro stopped anxiously to answer their questions and greet these men but in the end another man appeared from behind and shot him directly in our compañero’s body. He was brutally killed with more than 20 bullets to the body. This is what they have always
done, this is how this institution works and they have never faced justice. The first shot was in the head. Yes, twice in the head. And then they gave it to him in all the other parts of the body and killed him as if saying ‘no te metas’ [don’t get involved] or as if wanting us, the peasants, to pass the word on to the other leaders. We see it that way, it’s to say, ‘look don’t interfere in this matter, we have the power,’ no? But we are not afraid, we will continue in the luchas....“128

FORZA is a private intelligence-security firm which is employed by Yanacocha to surveil leaders, protesters, and Grufides workers.129 How did the workings of FORZA become public knowledge? One day in 2006, as Marco Arana was leaving his mother’s house, he saw a man filming from across the street. When Marco went to ask the man to identify himself, the man took off running. Marco got in his car and followed. An elaborate chase ensued through the streets of Cajamarca. The man headed for a white van but Marco pulled up blocking him in and called the police. After a few hours in the police station, the Colonel says to Marco, “What’s occurred is something very grave… it appears to be an espionage network.” The police confiscated two computers from the office of the spies and gave copies of the hard drives to Marco. The workers of Grufides were horrified to discover meticulous minute to minute logs of their waking hour movements, including pictures, videos and charts. Every step they took was recorded. Many of the workers at Grufides received code names. The name ‘El Diablo’ was given to Marco Arana, and Mirtha Vasquez, who would later become the defense lawyer for Máxima and the Chaupe family, was named ‘La Antojojuda,’ or ‘Four Eyes.’ Mirtha received calls from public telephones, “Is this the Doctora Mirta Vasquez?” “Yes.” A man's voice told her, “we are going to rape you, and we are going to kill you, and then we are going to cut your body up into little pieces and throw them in the garbage for the dogs to eat.” FORZA is composed of former intelligence officers from the Fujimori era in Peru, who were left unemployed after Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori was forced to resign in 2000. Eriberto had stories similar to Mirtha’s:

“One afternoon I was heading home from University when I received a call from a public number. I answered and someone insulted me and told me not to get
involved in this project otherwise they would end my life. It was totally stupid. They attacked me in this way but I am still not afraid. As a young man, I’m willing to fight because I’m fighting for a just cause, and all the peasants are fighting for a just cause even though they threaten us, try to kill us. We’ll never let our guard down because we, the peasants, we know about popular justice.”

Marco Arana, “El Diablo”  

Figure 2.4
“Now barely have we directed our attention towards an inner presence: what was concealed up to then takes on the fullness not of a storm— it is a question of slow movements— but of an invading flood. Now sensibility is exalted.”
— Georges Bataille, *Inner Experience*

Oct. 18th

After boarding a van in Celendín at 3:30am, we arrived in Santa Rosa around 10am. Walking on the main market strip I come to a small bridge. Looking upstream I see an idyllic clean river carving the green rolling slopes. The other side, downstream, is a garbage river. I’ve seen two Conga hats and a sweater in under a minute. Our friends warned us, “Santa Rosa is dangerous, they’re *pro-mineros.*” Unloading sacks of lime, onions, rolls of cheese from trucks. And there’s Aureliano.

“How didn’t you buy a sombrero from me? Where’ve you been?” He asks.
“New York.”
“How’s that?”
“New York… Estados Unidos.”
“Ya you see, I knew it wasn’t in Peru.”

It’s Friday market. Mounds of glistening colors, fruit brought up from the valleys. A stack of radiant sombreros for sale. Fashionable imported sneakers. A giant gutted pig. Salted fish. Dogs sniffing after cowering dogs, here to there. *Tecnico Dental,* reads one of the few signs in town. Traditional adobe alongside unfinished brick homes with long metal rods sticking out into the sky. Everything bright with early day. Plastic tarps blinding white with light. Muddy road glares, slick with last night’s rain. Cooking smoke rises up from the roofs, corrugated iron and tile alike. Just outside town, grass blazes with the intensity of Andean sun.

Crammed inside a dark room, we sit on benches spooning hen soup. Those grey paper slips that serve as napkins except the wax coating allows nothing to be absorbed.
“¿You’re tourists?”

Si.

Staring, staring, “¿where are they from?”

We go to Eribeto’s brother’s place. “Multiservicios Wiston” is painted in large letters on the building. Sitting out front are two men in ponchos and sombreros who ask if we’re going to the lagoon El Perol. “No….,” we answer, trying to keep a low profile. Then one man says he recognizes me from up at El Perol. Wiston comes over, pats the man on the shoulder, dissolving the anxiety, “they’re comrades of the fight for water”. I ask the men what they think of the United States: “we think that it’s a potency, a well advanced country, well developed due to its cultural advancement. As far as I have been able to analyze, this must be from the union between the intelligence and the food no? There they mainly consume, they say, soy, natural food, but here in Peru we don't develop ourselves because of egoism, pride, greed, machismo. I believe the people in the United States are different, above all, these people develop intellectually and it’s a prophecy that will be fulfilled in the last days because, according to the Bible, the United States represents a lamb with two horns di?”

I asked him: “Then the United States is like the devil or something? You’re saying that it has horns?”

“No, no, biblically the lamb is a symbol, the two horns mean innocence and meekness. It is a meek country pue where there is no wickedness.”

“But I don’t believe this, if we are going to speak honestly, I do not like my country.”

The other man speaks up, “Listen, but we’ve heard that your nation is more developed, has better category, better education, mmmmh and in turn, here it’s different and that’s why we can not advance here in Peru. We always live in backwardness. There is no professional who would be leader, that’s why we were raised with little wisdom.”
Oct. 19th

While I’m waiting around for Eriberto, Wiston brings me next door to his mechanic shop and introduces me to his uncle. The man was slumped over in the gloom, his hair overgrown, his clothing ragged and a woozy look in his eyes. He began telling me about his last visit to ‘Los Soldados’: “I grabbed two bottles of caña and went walking no? I went in, pucha but inside I went, abysmal it is inside and the darkness! My suitcase ya I’d left elsewhere, and no flashlight, nothing, not even a poncho. How do you get out? a su mare the darkness is terrible.” He paused to take a swig from the bottle by his foot, then offered it to me. I gave him my coca and after stuffing a wad of leaves in his cheek, he continued,

“That is, I got myself inside, sure thing, not in the middle ‘cause I’d never get out, those places are awful, thorns, all sorta things there, there are evil spirits there pue, but as I was drunk I didn’t know nothin’ and in the end there were so many people, a group of people was there, just all señores and well, in the end, I was fighting with one, sure thing, he attacked me, gave me a kick, I fell a little on the stone, here, it hurt some the next day no? On my back, and also he hit me here, on my head. It’s because of him that I saw...there are huacas, seems there is a cemetery, had been a cemetery, inside there’s a whole family…”

He gave me a concerned look and then whispered ominously, “garlic is a good secret for the evil spirits.” I was stunned. I got up to leave but it was his final comments that shocked me more than anything. I heard him say, “It’s a stone of cal, it’s good material, there’s for at least 5 generations of 100 years each, stone quarry pue, have you seen? of course it’s stone for cement, stone for construction, for crushed stone. What we need here is machinery, a stone crusher, to square the stone, but there’s none pue… like this, with the hand no more, you do nothing, that’s what we lack.”
The Story of Los Soldados is as follows: “A priest came wanting to colonize the people here, wanting to implant his religion... and soldiers came with the priest. The soldiers were advancing, wanting to fight with the people from here. They were going to face each other, the negritos from here with the soldiers. But the people from here did not want it to happen, they asked their gods that it wouldn’t be the case, that they would not fight. Those from here were leaving no? carrying all their things, that’s why in these routes there are images of people as if something were etched on the brain. Then when they knew that the soldiers were a few meters away ya from meeting them, they started a tremendous rainfall, and in this there was discharges, and the lightning petrified them. So that nothing happened no? those from here stayed asi fossilized, the soldiers too fossilized, everyone was fossilized. Also the church is still there actually in the cave. Therefore it failed to happen.”

“So the priest did not arrive?” I asked.
“They did not arrive!”
“Then this is a victory for you!”
“Yes, yes, nor the soldiers, the soldiers stayed up there. They didn’t arrive ya neither.”
Oct. 20th

Desolate morning, walk all over for bread, people pointing me in directions, mud roads, grey sky. First shop: “I’ve none left.” He gives me three stale breads for free. Next, two women sewing on sidewalk, cup of cancha between them. Nada. They point me down the road, to an old woman. She’s got, a solcitos worth, no more. One bag of breads, last one, and divides a sol of tomatoes into a 50 cent bag for me. I keep going looking for fruit. ‘Comercial Magali’ says above the door. A woman emerges from the darkness and asks, “how many apples?” but then she serves two girls, both with babies tied to their backs. The younger could be 13. Sells them diapers. Then she asks me about my companions, “where y’all from? What’re y’all doing here?” I say we’re from different places. Garbage in the ditch along the road. Lima, USA, Germany— we’re making a documentary and writing a book. I tell her, “I’m in favor of the water”. After talking a little more she asks me again if we’re in favor o contra the water. Then tells me she’s cousins with Eriberto and begins rattling off stories… awakens my heart. Breaks me out of myself. Puntos, stitches, in her head. She was beautiful, inviting me into the courtyard of her home:

“As many abuses, many abuses are committed by the people of the mine who come to cheat compañeros campesinos like myself— they come to fool us with their kitchens, with seeds, with whatever insignificant thing, no? Aside from that, we can no longer travel to Cajamarca when we have to, or at least not as quickly, and why? Because they have put up their gates and do not allow us to pass. They ask us for our IDs, who we are, how many are going in that car and they still say that we are passing through their private property. Yet they come through here, they pass back and forth and no one says anything.”

A rooster crowed. Maria tended to her baby and then suddenly broke into tears:

“As apart from that, my sister and I were attacked in the village of La Pampa Verde. They stopped a car there, a mine truck coming to hand out supplies, school supplies, among other things. They called on the commoners who were defending the water. They called us as backup to provide a solution, no? We had not gone to assault anybody and a small group of villagers from Pampa Verde assaulted us, attacked us. When we were leaving a ravine they attacked me and my sister. They
fractured my sister's nose and I have three gashes here on my head. They attacked us with stones and sticks.”

She told me there are many people who don’t join the protests because they’re afraid that they will be killed. “They’re afraid that the police will leave them paralyzed like comrade Elmer Campos…” She paused for a moment, grave and serious. Then she added with a laugh, “we used to say if they kill us, we don't suffer. If they attack us, we will suffer, for example we'll worry our families. But when we're alone, if they kill us it's not a problem.”

When she was 6 months pregnant, she went with her barriga [big belly] up to Conga to march for the anniversary of the lucha. She got tired and sat down, then a cop told her to keep moving. She said she was tired and he responded, “señora your people are up ahead, you need to leave here because this is private property.”

“This señor, I am not stealing your land.”
“Señora, if you resist we will take you to jail.”
“Great! I bet all the police are going to make a collection to buy the cloths for my baby.”
“If my daughter was born here I’d name her Conga.”
“Yes, Conga is a lovely name!”
“Señora, that’s how you people are, you put up resistance but later, when you’re in jail, you’ll be crying. And we’re not only going to bring you to Cajamarca but to Chiclayo!”
“Yes, I know Chiclayo! That’s no problem. Bring me wherever you want, it’s all the same to me!”
The cop fell silent for a moment. Then Maria said, “you imbeciles.”

Oct. 21st

Eriberto finally arrives. First things first, he tells me a joke:

“Once upon a time, this guy had his woman, and this huevon was a miner pue, and he would go to work and his woman would stay home. His woman was fine pue, puta she’d give it to the neighbors, and one neighbor grabs her and lifts her, so he lifts her ya… so another neighbor comes ya and says to him, ‘Oye your woman cheats on you at such and such hour in such and such hotel. Go there, stand there until she comes out,’ ya puta one day this guy decides to catch her and make her fall. So this huevon goes and stands there and he had one neighbor, a tombo130,
a cop and this cop pulls the guy over and says to him, ‘Neighbor, what are you doing?’ no? and the guy tells his neighbor, ‘my woman cheats on me and she’s here in this hotel with another guy,’ and all that, so then the tombo says to him, he was a vivaso pue, no? the tombos are all vivos, he says, ‘but neighbor, it’s better if I as an authority make justice. I’ll wait until your woman leaves and then I’ll attack the guy, because you’ll get in trouble if you do it.’ This huevon believes the tombo and he goes, ‘you go, I’ll wait for your woman,’ and he goes. Of course the tombo thought he’d grab the guy’s woman for himself. So the tombo stands there, watching, waiting, holding vigil. Some time passes and the guy returns and says, ‘boss, you see anyone?’ ‘No one, Go for another little spin around,’ says the tombo, ‘ya bacan,’ and he goes for another spin. More time passes and puta, yes! ya she leaves the hotel, his woman comes out, the tombos! The woman of the tombo! So he grabs her and gives her a tremendous smack, ‘concha tu madre,’ She says to the tombo, ‘what are you doing!’? and they grab each other to fight and just then his neighbor appears, the huevon, and sees the tombo hitting the woman pue, and he says to the tombo, ‘veshi, veshi, boss boss, she’s not the one, she’s not my woman,’ and the tombo says, ‘concha tu madre, she ain’t yours, she’s mine!’ Jajajajajajajajaja there the story dies… jajajajajajajaja. Speak, you understood?”

“Ay ay ay life is sad, but it serves them right, a miner and a cop!”

Eriberto exclaims: “You know, the tombos are bastards!! The only thing they teach you in the police academy is to be a huevon, insolent, arrogant. They don’t have intelligence, they don’t teach you to read books, they don’t teach you to do well in life. They teach you how to do exercises, and of course physical exercise is fine but there is also an education for life, but they use their minds for the sole purpose of service. I applied to the army and had the decision to apply for subofficial in Cajamarca, because in Cajamarca there are only subofficials. I saw how they prepare you, a cochinada, they train you with insults. They think only in terms of working and insulting people, humble people. They’re traumatized by the gun power. When they’re training, they gas ‘em, then when they attack, they no longer feel it because they develop an immunity to tear gas. I’ve never seen them feel proud of who they are and many of them smooth this over by picking up aspects of other cultures, other societies. They aren’t capable of confronting their own culture or feeling proud of who they are, or the way they are. Youth today are not capable of this. Just this morning I was talking to a woman about this issue. I told her the RENIEC is changing the photos on IDs. Why would you do that? I asked. She said the girl is very ugly— this is what we’re talking about— where is people’s self esteem? It's significant if your self-esteem is at rock bottom: you have to identify yourself as you are. One should value oneself, because someone from the outside is not going to value you, and we are rich in culture, tradition, customs, but nevertheless we turn our backs on what is ours. Like yesterday I told someone we were traveling with that we sell raw material to buy monopolies, to buy junk food, we sell our grains to buy noodles, to buy some nonsense that's bad for your stomach. And then for example, we export our fish to buy canned tuna, and damnit, that's the nonsense we eat. We consume garbage from the monopolies... I believe in Andean
communities, the peasantry has people who matter, people who sincerely serve their brothers and sisters, but regardless we are excluded, we don’t even have a voice, nor a vote, only a few have relatives in economic power but they only think about themselves. They construct here and they construct there, and then everyone invades. They think they’re the boss, and what about everyone else? There are elderly people, there are children, we need to think about them and their needs…”

**ANDEAN UTOPIA**

Most people believe that Cajamarca has lost its traditions. It is Cajamarca after all, where Atahualpa was executed and the Inca Empire came to an end. Forever after this place would be scarred, cursed. Yet this collective trauma also laid the seeds for another vision of history. In his book *In Search of an Inca: Identity and Utopia In The Andes*, Alberto Flores Galindo shows us that ever since the time of the Conquest, numerous rebellions in Peruvian history have been sparked by the idea that the Inca would return to cast out the Spanish invaders: “The Andean utopia was… an attempt to reverse dependency and fragmentation, to search for an alternative path in the encounter between memory and the imaginary.” In this vision, Tawantinsuyo becomes a golden age, not simply as an idealized past, but as a source of inspiration for the present and for the future. The myth forges bonds of solidarity and resistance with oppressed peoples across the centuries. Juan Santos Atahualpa (who some rumored was from Cajamarca), the Huarochiri rebels in 1750, Tupac Amaru II and Gabriel Aguilar are some examples. The Andean logic of return did not only apply to the Inca. Taqui Onqoy, the Dancing Sickness uprising, was driven by a strong faith that the local *huacas*, which is to say the pre-Inca gods, had returned to expel the foreigners.

Atahualpa offered Pizarro to buy his liberty by filling the room where he was kept prisoner with gold and twice more with silver. Atahualpa raise his arm up and they marked the stonewall where his hand reached. This room became known as the Ransom Room. There are multitudes of representations of Atahualpa immortalized in this gesture of submission, with his arm raised...
and his hand open. In that moment the sacred body was converted into a unit of measurement for a new value system, quantified and abstracted into capital. It was a moment of epistemic and ontic rupture: the desecration of the Son of the Sun, eclipsed by the obsession for Gold, the transmutation of Sun into *nuevos soles*. But what if Atahualpa closed his fist in solidarity? That would be a dialectical image converting the commodity into utopia. The image of the past flashes up in a moment of danger. This image must be grabbed or it is lost forever. This image carries with it the chance for the redemption of history.

Months later, having received the ransom, Pizarro ordered Atahualpa’s execution regardless. This is the foundational act of treachery which would remain scarred in collective memory. People in Cajamarca still talk about it: “the foreigners already came once. They tricked us and stole our gold. Now the transnational companies are trying to do it again, but we will not let history repeat itself.”

It is told how, before he died, Atahualpa vowed that he would come back one day to avenge his death. This is known as the Inkarri myth.

The resistance movement has caused a resurgence of Andean culture. A radical magazine from Celendín called “Inkarri” has the subtitle, “The Return of a Myth.” It is common in protests for the Tawantinsuyu flag to fly alongside the flags of Celendín, Bambamarca, and Peru. An anti-mining banner I saw included an image of Tupac Amaru II, and I heard the cry, “¡Viva la Pachamama!” ring out among the multitudes during a march. As we’ve seen, the fight to defend Quilish was won by means of a massive recognition that Quilish was an Apu, much to the chagrin of the mining company. But is it that surprising to discover a rebirth of Earth consciousness when transnational mining companies threaten the death of the planet? The *Cajamarquinos* face a world-
shattering crisis on par with the Spanish Invasion. No wonder many fall back on that history to explain the chaos engulfing their land.

The resistance movement provides an alternative vision of modern history by revaluing the Andean cultures which the Spanish Conquest had all but eradicated. This revaluation of the campesino flies in the face of centuries of denigration of Andean peoples, the exclusion wherein Peru formed its identity. And the colonial wound is still bleeding, every time the abuse of power is justified by the rule of Law, the march of Progress, or even the ‘Revolution’.

The national slogan (“Peru: Progress for All”) perfectly captures the inferiority complex which plagues the country. The obsession with progress implies that the people are always lacking something. Fixated on gaining entrance to modernity, people tend to miss the destructive side of progress. As Galindo writes: “Modernity and progress come at the expense of the traditional world.”135 Two distinct, mutually incompatible world views are going head to head, and the Cajamarquinos have made their decision: “¡Agua si, Oro no!”

In the epilogue, Galindo asks, “Understanding Andean utopia is essential for explaining social movements— but in the twentieth century, how relevant is the utopian horizon?”(245) I believe that the messianic consciousness beginning to boil in Cajamarca is the most recent iteration of this noble history of revolt. In Eriberto I see the latest manifestation of the Andean Utopia, but there are also more intuitive expressions among unschooled campesinas like Doña Máxima Acuña.

Jose Carlos Mariátegui, founder of the first Socialist Party of Peru [1928], believed history ought to serve as a ‘root’, not a ‘programme’.136 He thought Peru should combine the best of its proud history with the promise of Western technology and science, “precious instruments of human power.”137 He concluded in 1925, “Along these cosmopolitan and ecumenical paths…we come ever closer to finding ourselves.”138 But has modernization helped Peru come any closer to
finding itself? to “Peruvianising Peru”, as Mariátegui called it? Have we ever believed in such a marriage between Western science and Indigenous cultures? Technology which was designed to accomplish nothing less than the domination of Nature could never be married to Andean cultures which prioritized living with Nature, as shown by the indigenous concepts of sumak kawsay, ayni, yanantin and uyway. Mariátegui valued the Andean ways. While he refused ‘dreams of utopian restoration [of Pre-Columbian ways]’, Mariátegui contended that "the communitarianism of the Incas cannot be denied or disparaged for having evolved under an autocratic regime." It was Mariátegui’s hope that these ethics of collectivism and social welfare might become the foundation of Peruvian socialism.

Jose Maria Arguedas also believed that, in his words, “the copious stream [of wisdom and art] from the two nations could have and should have been united.” But instead of bowing before the allure of Progress, Arguedas proudly said, “I am not an Acculturated Man”:

“And there was no reason why the route followed had to be, nor was it possible that it should solely be, the one imperiously demanded by the plundering conquerors, that is: that the conquered nation should renounce its soul (even if only formally appearing to do so) and take on the soul of the conquerors, that is to say, that it should become acculturated. I am not an acculturated man; I am a Peruvian who, like a cheerful demon, proudly speaks in Christian and in Indian, in Spanish and in Quechua…”

In contrast to the forward-looking gaze of progress, the consciousness I am pointing to is called Pachacuti. As Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui he is the ninth Sapa Inca who is credited with expanding the Kingdom of Cuzco into the Inca Empire:

“His disruption of the country and introduction of new habits, it is believed, made him a reformer or transformer of the world. Garcilaso de la Vega, Blas Valera, and
Las Casas viewed him as an individual. For others, perhaps people closer to the indigenous world such as Guaman Poma, pachacuti was at once a telluric force, a cataclysm, a new epoch, and a punishment. Argentine researcher José Imbelloni, author of an indispensable book on this subject, argued that etymologically pachacuti meant ‘to transform the earth,’ the transition from one 500-year cycle to another. For Martín de Morúa, it meant ‘turning the soil’ as well as ‘to take away and disinherit one’s own worth.’ These are not necessarily incompatible meanings. They alluded to the transition from one age to another and its result, the inversion of the world. Mochica (200 B.C.-700) ceramics with the shield and the truncheon attacking the warrior represented the world upside down.” (Galindo, 22)

Throughout the Andes, the universe is divided into two complimentary parts, “a world above and a world below, heaven and earth, hananpacha and hurinpacha.” During the time of the Inca, “this cosmological order was duplicated on other levels. Cuzco, the empire’s capital, was divided into two neighborhoods- upper and lower- and the division in halves was characteristic of every town… Within this duality, its parts were both opposite and necessary to each other, and to preserve both and maintain equilibrium was the necessary guarantee that the social order would work.” (23) Pachacuti is the inversion of this cosmological and social order, thus “the conquest was a pachacuti…for many Andean people.” (22)

A poem written by an opponent to the great rebellion of Tupac Amaru II and Micaela Bastides (1781) says, “The world is either upside down/ Or it has lost its mind / Because the judge was subjected to torture / and the defendants became judge. / He who is feet becomes head / The vile slave, a lord / The thief, a legislator / The creepy-crawly, a person / The Inca Crown, the Royal Crown / The monarch, a great traitor.” This is “the classic image of popular revolutions as the inversion of reality.” (86) Galindo elaborates upon how Tupac Amaru II’s rebellion and pachacuti were further conjoined:

“…the belief in the return of the Inca was related to physical calamities that struck Peru during the eighteenth century: the 1720 epidemic in Cuzco that devastated the Calca highlands and reached all the way to Lima (‘one of the worst since its discovery’); torrential rains and floods that destroyed Zaña in 1727; the destructive 1746 earthquake in Lima, perhaps the worst in its long seismic history; and the
1779 and 1780 weather disturbances in southern Peru, where intense rainfall and flooding befell Arequipa and Cuzco itself. But the apocalypse and the pachacuti or, better, the fusion of the two did not arrive on their own. Like crops, they needed pleas and sacrifices to make the earth open and for the weather to change. Killing Spaniards formed part of change as total inversion: the pachacuti was violent, it brought new suffering, it hurt as much as childbirth…” 147

I came to find that this potential for reversal was ever-present in the Andes. I’ll always remember how on the 2nd anniversary of the martyrs of water, July 3rd and 4th, after a day full of mourning, marching and celebrating, Daniel Gil sang to us:

“This song that I sing is called world in reverse,
Because the lamb seeks the fox and the thieves seek the judge.
Last night I dreamed that a house was burning.
A lame man ran for water and a mute asked for assistance.
A cripple helped and a blind man watched.
And this song that I sing is called world in reverse
Because the lamb seeks the fox and the thieves seek the judge.”
3. THE LADY OF THE BLUE LAGOON

Figure 3.1
I am a Jalqueñita\textsuperscript{149} 
That lives in the mountains 

Herding my sheep 
In mist and heavy rain, 

When my dog barked, 
The police arrived, 

They took apart my shelter, 
They took away my things, 

Engineers, police, 
Robbed my sheep 

They ate sheephead soup, 
In the camp of Conga, 

I didn't have a bed, 
I covered myself with straw, 

I didn't have food, 
I only drank water, 

For defending my lagoons, 
They attacked me with bullets, 

My life I will lose, 
For defending my lagoons.

This song was a vortex for me. In this instant an emotional intensity passed from Máxima to myself, blasting through whatever personal pain I was feeling at my dislocation, opening me up to the mountainous ranges of sorrow and heroism occasioned by this great struggle. Before this moment I had only a vague sense that I needed to study song in relation to the resistance. The year before, on New Year’s Day, I had heard Máxima sing two songs, a heartbreaking \textit{yaravi} and a happy carefree \textit{huayno}. These songs stuck with me, sometimes rising to consciousness as I suddenly grasped the memory with certainty that I had found my project. Other times these impulses faded but I always returned to the wound her songs had opened. Then, after hearing Máxima sing
in Santa Rosa, I was sure. Over time I realized that my concern wasn’t with project at all but with experience, which is exactly what comes through Máxima’s songs against the mega-project of Conga.

All of these songs were composed without the use of pen and paper, for Máxima does not read or write. Intuition told me her songs were revolutionary. I didn’t know yet that singing is a traditional means of expressing strong emotion, joy or sorrow, found throughout the Andes. I suspected that the ‘ay’ endings on lines such as “con pajita me cubriay”, “comidita no comiay”, and “solo aguita yo tomabay” were traces of Quechua, where verbs typically end in ‘ay’, what Eriberto’s brother later called a “barbarismo.” But these native sounds are the signs of a still present connection to the pre-Hispanic past.

How shall I describe Máxima’s fusion of song and resistance? In Máxima’s singing we hear the overflowing of her soul. There is an excessiveness of powerful emotion, a depth to her suffering which by an inner alchemy she transforms into song. It really is an inner alchemy: changing shit into gold or pain into strength. Máxima is creating culture, oral history and social memory. As a campesina in a racista, clasista, y machista sociedad de mierda, this is no small accomplishment. Singing her story, she communicates that excess of experience which a bare recital of the ‘facts’ would neutralize. If Máxima were to tell her story, the tale would be punctuated with her tears but by singing, she turns her trauma into a protest and a potential source of healing. In the immediacy of song there is a sudden liberation. Singing always has something shamanic about it, especially in Peru, where there exists such vibrant legacies of song and sacred medicines. Make no mistake, this excess is dangerous. It is sacred in the etymological sense, containing the double meaning of both ‘blessed’ and ‘cursed’. There is an immense breakdown as the repressions of history give way, flooding those psychic dams which keep us isolated in our separate identities.
Song bypasses the intellect and goes straight to the heart. This breakdown, as her emotion surges forth, mirrors the breakdown in authority, law and order which the family has witnessed again and again as the police, courts, mayors, local media and neighbors all fail them, as their society fails them. Only intimacy can effectively communicate such weighted feeling. Intimacy breaks out, breaks through, breaks down. Máxima’s song is contagious, spreading like a wild fire, lighting up the consciences of people all over the world, inspiring them to fight. Bataille says about poetry, “it is the actuality of men outside the self”\textsuperscript{150}, and this goes doubly for Máxima: “someone who is not touched with a sovereign emotion cannot experience poetry, in which nothing is withheld.”\textsuperscript{(138)}

If the power of poetry is to “communicate the condition of the poet to those who hear him,”\textsuperscript{(138)} then Máxima deserves to be honored as a poet of the resistance, for it is precisely her condition which she transmits to her listeners: “It is the cry of what, within us, cannot be reduced; what, within us, is stronger than us.”\textsuperscript{(138)} In her songs there is an absolute defiance but also a sacrifice which signifies, “in the most precise way, creation by means of loss.”\textsuperscript{151} Once you have heard her sing it will stay with you, possess you. Her song is a gift to which we are now obliged to reciprocate.

One time I asked Máxima,

“How did you learn to sing?”
“To sing, well, that… came \textit{ya} from my, from my own, or that is, from the struggle, from the suffering… came from… when the problem started ¿no?”
“So you didn’t sing before?”
“No…”

I was astounded. Her songs had flown out of her spontaneously, as an impulse or perhaps, to use the atrocious discourse of the academy, as a culturally conditioned response to trauma. Máxima’s songs are remarkable on account of their direct connection to the life and lucha of the singer. In the most radical sense, \textit{Máxima communicates her experience}. Her singing affirms campe
dino culture and strengthens the resistance, unleashing a force which has the potential to change
the world. If you demand a further explanation, heed Samuel Beckett: “When you are up to your neck in shit, all you can do is sing.”

Figure 3.2
SORCERY AND MINING

“the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God”
— William Blake, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

When Doña Máxima was flown to Europe by a French solidarity group to plead her case before the United Nations, I spent two weeks up in Conga alone with her husband, Don Jaime Chaupe. The days were spent chasing cattle or swinging the pickax, with meals of boiled potatoes and maybe a little trout from the Blue Lagoon when we were lucky. At night we’d stay up chewing coca and limestone\(^\text{152}\), smoking hand rolled cigarettes, and drinking sugar cane whiskey [cañazo]. The single candle flame flickering in the shadows. Holding vigil. If there is a sound in the night or if the dogs bark Jaime’s up and out the door with his handheld spotlight and revolver. He would start the evening with a prayer to the coca leaf.

In name of God and of the Country and the Mother Earth. In name of the Earth we are going to calear. If nothing happens, all positive, you will arm me honey honey mishkina mishkina\(^\text{153}\) and if the engineers come to attack us, or do us evil you will embitter me vervena vervena\(^\text{154}\), you will burn me and embitter me— little coca tell me our fate, if nothing happens you will sweeten me honey honey mishkina mishkina you will arm me— in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit— Amen.

Like other campesinos in Cajamarca, Jaime keeps his limestone [cal] in a small hollowed out gourd [calero]. The top piece has a needle attached which is jabbed into the gourd making a clicking sound: chirp, chirp, chirp, “like a frog calling water.” The needle with its coating of cal is then inserted into the coca ball lodged in one’s cheek. Chirp chirp chirp, the sound was a constant companion on solitary nights in the highlands.

Little coca clumps fly out of his mouth as he is caleando… then he interprets it:

“There’s a group of people… but they’re bad.”
The candle light sputters, I ask him, “What do you see?”
“Someone’s going to die.”
Inspecting the needle of the calero.
“How is that?”

Jaime is on his knees staring at the candle. He tells me, “The little candle warns when there is something bad, it bursts or it can blow out, but when nothin’ happens, burns normal, its star shines, no? When nothin’ happens.” The candle’s star refers to the tip of the wick, when it grows bright and incandescent.

“Mm, and when the candle is like this… schu, schu, schu?” [flickering]
“‘It’s a little complicated pue there… that is, we’re going to see disturbances no?’”

A wax drop runs down the candle.

“It cried and burst, two times, somebody will do us daño [sorcery].”

We chew coca a moment— that wet soppin’, chewing sound, bitter and green. Jaime lights a match and puffs his cigar, then he examines it.

“You read the cigar also?”
“Sometimes it also warns pue.”

He speaks silently into his cigar. Rolled in a sheet of graph paper from my notebook.

“How do you read the cigar?”
“When there’s a disturbance, people that anda [walk, move], the little candle starts walking like this, and if they come to attack you, the cigar will burst! And if not, no! Watch, see there for example there anda, you see? There is commotion still, still there is commotion for those that are round here ya the people.”

Against the crumbling adobe wall are two crumpled and bent plastic soda bottles filled with herbs from the mountain of the Blue Lagoon: “the ruda macho, the trenza macho, the condor mullo, and the sticks, those are the shango, palo santo, the ishpingo, which are soaked in the cañazo. Sometimes when my belly hurts I take a little cup.”

“…and Agua Florida?”
“A few drops, no more.”
“And what do you do with this?”
“When the skunk came I grabbed it, I blew it pue like this no? With the cañazo I blew it and it removed the smell.”
“We are speaking of the illness of Doña Máxima years back no?”

While Jaime was building a house for his family, Máxima got sick and suffered for two years, “Not the hospital, not the health post, nothing would make her well…ya my wife was there ya ruined ya, about to die.” That’s when Jaime’s aunt says, “let’s give her the remedy for the mal aire... just in case.” So they boiled the San Pedro with the trenza macho and gave it to Máxima, “opening her mouth ya because she couldn’t say nothing ya.” They gave her a half cup and she began to react, to speak. And from there she began to get stronger. The next day they gave her a full cup.

Jaime continued to lament:

“For two years I was stuck with nothing, nothing, nothing, so then ya I couldn’t make my house here because I had nothing, I didn’t have food, I didn’t have money no? because I had spent it all on my wife who was sick. I didn’t finish my house that I was making. It’s still there, two rows about a meter high and there it is for everybody to see no? The foundation, that’s still there, the wall, all of it. My life has been a little worrisome no? on account of my wife’s illness… and later my wife got stronger and ya I was happy again, and then the mine came to make more problems for us. They want to take my land away, my property no? This property cost me my suffering, my work, my forces no? And this is the only property that I have.”

“I heard from Ysidera that Doña Máxima was sick from a type of sorcery… is that the same story?”

“Yes, I’m telling you that she suffered for two years. And yeah, I’ll tell you with what illness… I don’t know, it could be mal aires no? a skunk came to the house, in the silence of the night, it was 12 o’clock and it wanted to get inside... so it urinated all over the place, and since then she fell ill. Whatever it was that came to piss here spooked my wife, and I’m sure it was sent by some sorcerer, an unjust wickedness… sometimes cause of greed no? My wife worked day and night, she didn't do no harm to the neighbor.”

He paused for a moment. The chirp chirp chirp of his calero as he stares hypnotically into the candle. Then he says,

“I’d like to add that Saturday, around 10 at night the skunk came to the house wanting to get in, so then I left to [kill it] pue no? and it cleared off urinating on the
dogs, everywhere. *Ya no, ya no,* the dogs *ya* didn’t bark nothing *ya* and since then *ya* they don’t bark because the skunk has come to piss here in the door of my house and so then it drowned me no? … I came out and the skunk cleared off down hill, and as it was raining I didn’t follow it, if not I’d have killed it down over there.”

“Is the skunk common here or is it rare?”

“No, during all the time that I have been here, it’s the only time that it has come here. It left through there, for the mountains but didn’t piss. I don’t know what is going on here no?”

Signs of affliction begin to collide: an unfinished house, illness, sorcery, a skunk, dispossession and police brutality. As in a dream or a poem, the disgrace he feels suddenly takes on a life of its own, manifesting itself as a skunk comes to piss in the door of his house, stealing the bark from his dogs and drowning Jaime in a vile odor. The disgrace he feels is made tangible: it’s as blatant and as gross as a skunk’s stench. It spreads its stink over everything… could one imagine a better symbol for how the Chaupe’s feel? And what do we make of the repetition? It’s coming is already a returning, foreshadowed years ago by Máxima’s illness.

The unfinished house, with its foundation jutting out of the ground, abandoned to the cold highland wind and rain, is another of these poetic images, a symbol of the oppressive emotions which the Chaupes’ bare. In three years of litigations that foundation should have proved the family’s possession of the land.

Their home is ever under siege. Even after the Chaupes were finally acquitted of all criminal charges, there have been extralegal incidents. On January 20th, 2015, at approximately 1:00pm, fifteen police officers, armed with machine guns and shields, accompanied by engineers and security agents of the mining company entered the property without permission. Amnesty International’s call of ‘Urgent Action’ reports that “the invaders started taking photos of the Chaupe’s house, and when the family questioned why the police officers were in their property, no one addressed them or provided any legal documentation to support their actions”. Then on
February 3rd, at approximately 10:00am, about 200 police officers and engineers of the mining company entered the property violently, firing shots. The police rounded up Máxima, Jaime and four *ronderos* that were helping to build an extension to their home, two of them were under age. The agents destroyed the family's construction without a warrant and/or the presence of a prosecutor.

The Chaupe’s land is also essential for the greater *lucha* of the mining resistance. In October 2012 hundreds of *rondas campesinas* men and women formed two camps to hold vigil over their threatened lagoons. The ‘Celendín’ camp, overlooking the Blue Lagoon, was located on the Chaupe’s land. As an island amid the immanent sea of destruction, so the Chaupe’s land dispute became iconic in the fight for water.

Now perhaps we can begin to understand the meaning of a sorcerer sending a skunk to piss on the Chaupe’s house. Máxima’s daughter Ysidora told me,

“There was a person that hated my mama and they say that he worked it with a skunk. He killed the skunk and they say that he made it so the skunk’s intestines dropped from its legs, and my mamá suffered with this illness, exactly the same, that is, for example, wherever she sat, they say that all her intestines would drop and her bowels would fill up, from here to her vaginal parts and the blood came, and came and came, and she stayed like that… I was a little girl, yes I remember when I would see it, she who suffered all that wickedness [*maldad*], wherever she sat, she’d get up and there would be blood everywhere… she couldn’t heal herself. And there was a señor that said to her, ‘daughter, they have done sorcery to you,’ he said to her, ‘you can not heal yourself like this, like this easily.’ And my mamá ya she was that she die ya, she was in the last moments ya she did not know people, nothing, like this, and they said, ‘bring her to Chiclayo to cure her because there there are people that cure.’”

Máxima’s problems with the mine began when she returned home from Chiclayo. She noticed a wide new road carved into the hillside running right past her straw huts. Was Máxima’s illness a premonition of her conflict with the mine? Has Yanacocha done sorcery against the Chaupe family? I never had the chance to ask Máxima these questions. One recent article\textsuperscript{159} refers
to her ‘infection of the ovaries,’ but there is no mention of sorcery. It seems clear to me that Máxima’s illness is an image of the mining: there is a magical correspondence between the bleeding of her partes intimas and the rape of Pacha Mama. It is an image of being hollowed out, disemboweled. The Lagoon El Perol is scheduled to become an open pit 2km across and 1 km deep. The Blue Lagoon will become an enormous toxic waste dump for the 90,000 tons of tailings which the mine will produce every day for 17 years. The Conga mega-project will destroy fresh water resources affecting 100,000 people. Where are the limits between the body of Máxima with its illness caused by sorcery and the body of the Pacha Mama devastated by industrial extraction?

There are invisible forces which do not express themselves directly. Rather they speak through signs and omens. Strange occurrences may be reported prior to cataclysmic events. In the district of Hualgayoc, there were reports of a calf born with no front legs, and a week earlier, of a calf born with two heads and four eyes.

The Chaupes fight against a malevolent reality, one which lies behind the different manifestations of illness, sorcery, poverty and the police. All misfortune becomes conflated in their encounter with Evil, maldad. The insidious way the mine corrupts and contaminates everything it touches fits this sense of an invisible, lurking contagion. Evil wind, fright, sorcery—this is the nightmare of history. The devastation wrought by the mine is not unlike the waves of epidemic diseases which the Spanish Conquerors introduced. The neocolonial mines, like the conquistadors centuries before, spread death and destruction everywhere they go. Máxima’s illness is part of this larger picture of misfortune which the Chaupe family live through everyday. As Ysidora remembers:

“Bueno, I have many things to tell but they are very sad because they’re some things that you remember, that you suffer. In that period we only covered ourselves with one garment, like this, only one garment and it was torn, torn like this, all your body was seen. Because ya, in those moments she was sick, could not
work, could do nothing. My siblings, all of them it’s like this, I would go to people and if they gave me food I would put it in a bag and I would bring it for them so that they eat it because in my house no? we had nothing. Nothing, nothing, nothing because they ya didn’t work, my papa neither, it was bad, bad, bad. And now, ya recently ya I suffer from illness because the more one goes out, the more distracted ya. With this problem that we’ve had ya [things are] very different, things have changed a great deal.”

It would take a trip to a curandera and a dose of ‘the remedy’ San Pedro to cure Máxima, “I was not well, really bad, I was impossibilized ya and we didn’t have the money pue.” First, Máxima’s sister-in-law loaned them a bull to sell so they’d have money to pay a healer, but then seeing that Máxima and Jaime couldn’t pay the money back, the sister-in-law said, “I know the word of God and like this I’ll cure her, I take responsibility. I heal you.” Máxima continued narrating,

“We didn’t have money and the señora cured me, she gave me a remedy, with fasting and prayer, she gave me the medicine. I remember no? just like this having a conversation with everyone sitting and then I don’t remember. It came to me like a dream, I don’t know what, I didn’t see anything, no? just as if I were sleeping and in the dream I saw a striped cat, \(^{162}\) he went twice around my head and he was going to escape. He turned from my left arm to my right and he was going to escape and I caught him with my arm and he turned and the face of a person appeared. When I saw him like that I was screaming in my dream, ‘Like that? Why that person? Why that person?’” And everybody was around me normal, seated watching, and from there, I was crying, crying and crying, and I said, ‘Why was I dreaming like that?’ And again I went back to dreaming, and I saw him, an older man appeared, all his white hair and clutching his cane, like this and he went to my side, and he said to me, ‘Daughter,’ he said, ‘I am going to give you a remedy so that you cure’ and he showed me two sticks, he showed them to me like this. He said to me ‘See, whichever person that comes, with these you are going to clean him and you are going to throw it to the path.’ I didn’t know, no? And I tell her pue, the señora who cured me, I tell her and she said to me ‘He has given you your gift,’ she said.”

Who is this old man who gives Máxima her gift? At first, with a cane, the old man appears to be the Christian God and indeed Máxima interprets him this way. Yet when he shows Máxima the two healing sticks there is something distinctively Andean in the old man’s symbolism. Viracocha (fat or foam of the sea\(^{163}\)), is represented archeologically holding two poles, for example, as
engraved on the temple of Chavin de Huantar and above the Gate of the Sun at Tiahuanaco. Viracocha is known as God of the Staffs and also keep in mind the wandering deity Tonapa Viracocha who went from village to village disguised as an old beggar. Thus it seems that Máxima actually received her healing gift from the great Andean deity Viracocha, creator of the universe! Viracocha is the unmanifest formlessness out of which springs Andean dualism. S/he is said to be androgy-nous, wearing the sun for a crown, with thunderbolts in her/his hands, and tears descending from her/his eyes as rain. How do we account for this? Máxima does not know the name Viracocha and has probably never seen her/his representation on temples, and yet she is dreaming her/him!164

These little known details provide a mythological substratum to the lucha, fusing the elements of resistance and healing into a messianic figure: The Lady of the Blue Lagoon! “Whichever person that came for whichever thing, if they’re adult, if they’re child, I’d heal them.” At first she didn’t want to, “I said no pue.” She’d never cured before. But a woman arrived: “she brought her little baby dead, dead ya pue, if ya I didn’t do anything.” The mother said, “Do you know how to cure? Cure him.” The lady pleaded so much to ya do her the favor and so Máxima healed him, “that boy stood up, he who was dead ya got stronger. And from there, they came pue, one came, another came and whoever it was, even with salt water, I gave them something and they would get stronger. Ya it was normal.” Ysidora remembers, “it was as if the people knew that my mama cured.” People took their children to Máxima:

“She’d heal them of a susto [fright], she’d heal them of a colera [rage], she’d heal all types of illness. She would read their pulses and it’s as if the answer came to her mind and she’d say to them, ‘it’s such and such illness, it must be cured with this,’ and heal it. And from that moment ya the people thought that my mama could cure… but now ya she does not dedicate herself to that because… they did it again, they did another illness to her so that she can’t do this type of thing, so that she can’t cure, and since then she reads the pulse of the people only sometimes. When it’s really bad it shocks her quite a bit and leaves her in bed, that’s why we ya we also don’t want her to cure because it shocks her a lot.”
Máxima told me that this new illness also came in the form of a dream: “…and that’s where I caught the snake, the Devil, some malignant evil pue. It was a Saturday, just like today, and a boy came to be healed.” While she was curing the boy a drowsiness fell upon her. She lay down to sleep in the pampa and instantly a dream “caught” her. She heard a voice say, “Ha, ha ha, hay. Ha, ha ha hay. Look there, look there, comes comes the snake, comes comes the snake.”

“And bluuum the snake pue was driving itself into my head. Then it said, ‘ya no, ya no,’ as if the Devil trapped me. God gave me my gift but the Devil trapped me. That is, he wanted to tempt me, no? that is he conquered me because really there was no other person to give me reinforcement pue. Then, from there, ya I couldn’t, ya almost, no? And even now. But some dreams still confirm me.”

_Evil wind, fright, sorcery…_ is this how the Chaupe’s experience history? modernity? progress? What does it mean if their supposedly less sophisticated folk models, pejoratively called superstition, in fact yield more reliable results, providing better insights into the world and a very accurate understanding and critique of what motivates the mining company? As Jaime said, “sometimes cause of greed no?”

In another moment Máxima told me, “and with their excavator machine they were going to dig underground, so that, killing me or my family, they bury us there…” Encapsulated in this image is the conflation of modernity as death machine, mining as grave-digging, progress as destruction.

The snake is driving itself into her head. Máxima has received a series of death threats. A Yanacocha worker recently threatened to “make her disappear” and a few days later one of her neighbors called her a “pendeja” because she won’t leave her land and let the mine continue with its work. Her dog Pastora is now partially blind and crippled, hit by rocks from miners’ sling-shots. Pastora was to replace Pastor, the dog which the police killed last year, running him over with their truck. Yanacocha has built a chainlink fence around the Chaupes’ property, with only one exit onto the road.
But some dreams still confirm her.

One time Máxima came to Cajamarca to tell her lawyer that in the night she’d been shot at. Máxima’s lawyer told me, “they say the police had been watching that the men ya had went and that nobody remained in the camp [of the Guardians of the Lagoons]. So then she said that they heard shots and that the women were scared, they wanted to leave running, they didn’t know what to do, and a few of them began to cry and Máxima said to them, ‘No don’t run compañeras, we are strong, moreover God accompanies us and we are going to sing, let’s sing!’ and they began to sing, to sing and she told that they sang and at first they heard the bullets but later with the songs stronger they forgot about the bullets and they ya began only to enjoy the song and all this, it was something when she told it, it left me ahhh…. we cried, very strong no? ‘compañeras sing! and we took each other by the hands and we sang and the bullets sounding’ and truly we were so moved, so touched… it was one day that they shot at the camp when there were only women and the men had gone down…”
“Justice of Gold / Robs the Land of the Humble Peasant…”
A depiction of Doña Máxima in the style of Guaman Poma.

Figure 3.3
DREAMS AND VIOLENCE

“Do ye know the terror of him who falleth asleep? To the very toes he is terrified, because the ground giveth way under him, and the dream beginneth.”

— Thus Spake Zarathustra

Here are the events which occasioned the Chaupe family’s problems with the Law, as told by Jaime and Máxima in the court of Celendín. On the 9th of August 2012, the engineers came with 100 police and more Securitas167 to evict the Chaupe family. Jaime laments, “They took my chozas [straw huts], they took my bed, they took my stove, they took my tools, everything and they left me like this in the pampa … where there’s ya nothing.” The straw and wood of the chozas they loaded into their cars and they took it. As Máxima told the judge, “They left us like this Señor as I am and my witness is the Father that is in the sky, ain’t nobody going to fool him, he’s reading our hearts of each person, who of us is in the truth and who no, so they took apart my chozas, they took my things in their trucks, they took my food, raw, cooked, señores I went, I kneeled, ‘please don’t do this to me, do not strip me naked168, don’t leave me hungry.’’” The Chaupe’s defense lawyer told me the family resisted leaving the land, “so in order to evict them by force, they destroyed these chocitas that the family had no? they left them exposed to the elements in order to obligate them to leave but they didn’t count on that the family would resist.”

Jaime continues his account of the events of August 9th, “and there they hit my wife and me. I turned to defend her and the police pointed at me with their guns like this and hurled two bombazos and they shot, they gave two shots and the bullets passed sounding like this by my ear. I felt it. So then I thought, I said this, ‘ya they shot me,’ I said like this, ‘ya they killed me.’…” When they began to fire my younger son said, ‘help help,’ he screamed from one side to the other but as they were all workers of the mine, they watched, no more, when the police hit us.”
This is the moment of disillusion where the Chaupe’s realized there is no law, there is no order, there is no authority, these words mean nothing. In trauma, the assumptions of your world get shattered. There is only senselessness. Explosive disruption of one’s experience.

MÁXIMA: “They brought their excavator machine saying that they make a platform, other platform indicated the engineer so that the operator do it, then I make my daughter kneel so that they can’t do it, like this, at which they grabbed her, they dragged her and they hit my daughter in the brain with the butt of the machine gun and tossed her to the floor and to me it cost a very big pain that for my own land, for my own property, without receiving a cent, a crumb of bread, like this they do it, like this they do it to my daughter, screaming I run to her, wanting to lift her up, just then the police caught me like this from behind, Señores they caught me and the others came in front, they beat my arms with their batons, they dragged me and…” [she cries]

JUDGE: “Señora calm yourself.”

MÁXIMA: “I can not stand it.”

JUDGE: “You must calm yourself. You will continue declaring, take air, you will continue declaring.”

Jhilda spent three hours lying on the grass. Everyone thought she had died and the police withdrew from the area. Fortunately she only fainted. Jaime cut ichu from the surrounding area and the following days they slept outside under bushes of ichu for warmth because at 4,200 m the cold in the nights pierces the bone. But they did not leave the land.

Violence such as this changes a person. It would not be surprising if such trauma were to go on repeating in the unconscious for years afterward, if not for the rest of one’s life. But what do we make of the fact that Jaime dreamed of these events before they occurred? Before the police came and attacked the Chaupe family, Jaime had a dream in which stampeding bulls destroyed their home:

“I was working besides my chozas and I heard a noise of bulls so I get up and look uphill and a number of bulls appeared, bulls of all classes: black bulls, painted, red, bays, different colors the bulls were, but some were tremendos torasos [tremendous bulls], with nape, really fat ones, and others were pretty skinny. The
bulls appeared on the crest and then directed themselves to where I was, so I stopped and said, ‘the bulls come to gore me,’ I said like this, I thought. And just then I warned my children, my wife, I said to them, ‘a bunch of wild bulls are coming, let’s get outta here,’ and the bulls ya they trapped us more ya and so we took the downward path. We crossed some swamps and we beat the bulls running and ya we arrived at a very tall hill that is one rock. From my choza further down there is a rock bien alto and that’s how we escaped. We went up the rock and there was a ledge and from there I watched them, I turned around to watch the bulls. They came to the foot of the mountain, they raised their tails and the bulls began to gore the hill. They made sparks on the stones with their horns, goring it like this and in my dream I thought that they were going to knock down the hill but no, no the hill didn’t move and therefore that hill saved me, in my dream. And so the bulls watched me from down below and said, ‘Thanks to this hill you saved yourself. This hill helped you, if not you’d die here,’ the bulls said to me, they speak. And so I died of fear there pues. It was I and my children and my wife, we were on the crag all of us, but that crag ya there was no way for the bulls to climb up and so they returned ya the bulls roaring and I watched to see if they go along the path no more or they go where my chozas are and I saw that they took the road toward my chozas. In my dream I saw that and I said172, ‘How have those bulls come to be in my choza where I live?’ They lifted my choza toda they took everything on their heads, on their horns, they took the wood, the straw, everything that had been in the choza, it was my dream. My land I saw it everywhere muddy like winter and in my dream all that, they went trampling the grass. And so I said, ‘Where are we going to sleep?’ because we were in the darkness, and ‘in this night I do not know how we will sleep? How will we dawn?’ I said in my dream. And so, I said to my children, ‘let’s go cut pajita [little straw] and we sleep there ya pues, what more?’ And so the bulls ya they went, they disappeared and they left… nothing remained ya my choza disappeared, my two chozas that I had, where we were living. And so, my children cried, my wife, ‘how are they going to do like that?’ they said in my dream, ‘these wild animals that come to destroy our home.’”

Many people in the lucha spoke of dreams as omens which foretold events. It became clear to me that dreams are another plane upon which the lucha is fought, another plane upon which the resistance operates. From dreams people receive premonitions, warnings, insights and inspirations. Dreams double the lucha of their waking lives, or is it that the lucha doubles their dreams?

I’ll always remember Señora Santos selling peanuts in the corner of the plaza de armas of Celendín. Her son was one of the 5 martyrs of water who were killed by the police (4 dead on July
3rd, 2012 in the city of Celendín and one more on July 4th, 2012 in the city of Bambamarca).

When I asked her about her son’s death, she narrated it to me through a series of dreams she had before the event.

“When them protests started I dreamed of that slope where they sell the quinoa from? I dreamed a motorbike was comin’ with a stick and rolled up all the corn that was flowerin’, flowerin’, where the flowers were ‘bout to come out and it swept up everythin’, so I thought we’re gonna win the fight. So I said to the others, ‘Friends, let’s not back down now, ‘cause we’re gonna win the fight, I dreamed it already.’ And I dreamed that stick sweepin’ up all the corn, it sure did dry ‘em all up and they fell, all of ‘em. Eventually they got up but all old, all broken, all dry, that corn. So I’s already startin’ to come aware that I’m gonna lose my son, but I didn’t realize. So when I gone back from Cajamarca to Celendín, I dreamed second of May that there was four flags in rows, like this, on both sides of the street, little white flags with their black letters an’ I saw that they got in four groups an’ the four groups hugged each other, so I thought we’re already winnin’ the triumph, but I didn’t realize that I’s already lookin’ at the...the...my son who’s gonna die, I’m gonna start mournin’ because the black letters, so that’s how I told it. And that day the third of July ‘round five in the mornin’, I dreamed my arm’d broke -- an’ sure enough that day I was gonna lose my son. I dreamed my arm broke, fell on the ground but didn’t hurt. So I said, ‘My God, what’s gonna happen today?’ I got up an’ asked God, ‘God,’ — I said — ‘take care of us on this day, what’s gonna happen?’”

Señora Santos then sang a song forged from her pain and suffering:

Cajamarca, Bambamarca, Cajamarca and Bambamarca,
Filled up with policemen, filled up with policemen,
Saying that we’re terrorists, saying that we’re terrorists,
Oh damn the president, oh damn the president,
Damn the authorities, damn the authorities,
They sold their conscience, they sold their conscience,
For a little bit of money, for a little bit of money.
Let’s not back down now friends,
We’ll keep on fighting, we’ll keep on fighting,
Even if they’ve gotta kill us, even if they’ve gotta kill us,
We’ll die for water, we’ll die for water.

In his study of Andean dreaming, Luis Andrade Ciudad includes bulls (along with cats, sheep, and foxes) on a list of ‘demon animals for betrayal and delays.’ He specifies that bulls signify “hidden enemies.”

He notes that in Andahuaylillas, Cuzco, cows and fat bulls announce the mal de aire (wayra) and in Tupe, province of Yauyos, Lima, they signify sickness from chill
or rheumatism. Alison Spedding in her book Sueños, Kharisiris y Curanderos supports the malign-
nant dream interpretation of bulls: “to not achieve what one intends, to be frustrated.”174

The history of Andean dreaming proceeds the Conquest: “Reports from the early seven-
teenth century campaigns against native religion mention both interpreters of dreams and dream
ministers (Hernández Príncipe 1622: 25ff.; Arriaga 1621:206; see Jiménez 1961). Early Spanish
accounts of the Inka state (e.g. Cieza 1967 [1550]: 102) mention specialist dreamers and interpret-
ers who were attached to the state. Garcilaso de la Vega (1609: lib. IV, cap. xxii) reported that the
dreams of royalty and priests were especially valued as auguries.”175 According to the Jesuit Father
Pablo Joseph de Arriaga, principle promoter of the extirpator campaign, dream ministers176 were
specialists, not in the interpretation of the dreams of others— as are our modern psychoanalysts—
but rather in the reading of their own dreams. In Arriaga’s text, The Extirpation of Idolatry in Peru
[1621], dreaming is listed along with many other sorts of divination (Sócyac: casting of lots or
divination with corn. Rápiac: moving the fleshy parts of the arms, if he moves them to the right
all will be well, if to the left the omen is bad. Pacharícuc, pacchacatic, or pachacuc: divination by
the feet of the common hairy spider. Hacarícuc or cuyrícuc: divination by guinea pig, …)

“Móscoc is divination through dreams. A person comes and asks whether
he will get well or die of an illness, or whether he will find a lost horse, etc. The
sorcerer who is consulted asks the Indian to give him a slingshot, which he wears
tied around his head, or for his chuspa or cloak, or some other article of clothing.
If the inquirer is a woman, he asks for her chumbi, or sash, or something similar.
These he takes home and sleeps on, then answers according to his dreams. If they
consult him about love, he asks for a lock of hair or an article of clothing of the
person he is divining about.” (Arriaga, p. 35)

With the Conquest, Andean dreaming was actively repressed: “The extirpators of idolatry
of the 17th century cite the interpreters of dreams (with frequency, as nowadays, they were women)
as one of the classes of indigenous ‘ritual specialist’ that it was necessary to control” (Spedding,
Evangelists such as Polo [1571] and Cobo [1636] “observed the widespread Andean pre-occupation with dreams and dream interpretation and enjoined its practice.” In the Third Council of Lima (1582-1584) the ecclesiastic authorities called to the recently converted faithful, in their own language, to leave, once and for all, wondering about the significance of their dreams:

Ama moscoyta yupaychanquichicchu, caytam chaytam mosconi, ymapac mosconam riispa ama tapucunquichicchu: moscoyca yancallan manam yupaychaypacchu.

[“Do not give value to dreams, ‘I dreamt this or that, why did I dream it?’ Don’t ask. Dreams are lies; they are not to be valued.”] But Guaman Poma only notes these dream images as evidence of Andean people’s heathenism: “Superstitious people! The Indians— from the time of the Inca and from this time alike— believe in dreams.” (91) According to Mannheim, “Guaman Poma worked as translator for the idol-smasher Cristobal de Albornoz, and was influenced by the published works of the Third Council of Lima. An unabashed Christian (albeit an Andean one), he considered dreams to be the work of the devil, and so relabeled the dream ministers 'dream witches' and 'lying witch sorcerers' (llulla laica umi).” As Guaman Poma writes in his catalogue of Andean sorcery: “Other sorcerers sleep and in dreams they speak with demons who tell them everything that happens and everything they desire and ask for. These are the dream sorcerers and at dawn they make sacrifices and worship the demons. These are subtle and secretive sorcerers, and in this way they fool the people.” (88) And yet still to this day, for people such as Máxima and Jaime Chaupe, dreams are visions of things to come.

One time I asked Máxima: “Do you believe that dreams come true?”
She answered, “Yes, in my dreams that I have, it would be very occasional that perhaps it has not coincided. Otherwise, what I dream comes out exactly, it coincides. Some people who don’t know me, who don’t believe me, they said to me ‘No, the dream is a lie, it lies,’ they say, ‘no reality comes of it.’ But for me, yes.”

During early mornings in the Andes it is common to hear dreams narrated among family members or friends. So then why has dream interpretation largely gone unreported in the literature on contemporary Andean peoples? Perhaps because Andean dreaming subverts our Enlightenment assumptions about linear time, the sophistic nature of imagination and the psychic isolation of the modern subject. When dreaming makes claims about other people or about the future it violates the reality-principle. To a society obsessed with progress, dreaming is obscene when it claims to be a communication. Dreams are a sign of backwardness. They are supposed to stay in your head. It’s like showing your private parts. It is intimacy out of place. In this way, dreaming becomes a transgression and valuing one’s dreams becomes an act of revolt. Spedding argues that, for her informants, “the fact of dreaming many times of a certain person indicates that he or she is thinking a lot about me. That is to say, the Andean dream expresses interactions with others…Not even the dream, that experience apparently completely inaccessible to others, is seen as lacking in interpersonal interaction… We are facing two different conceptions of the individual, his/her psyche and the relation that it has with others. This relates to other fields such as the moral.” (138)

My point is that Jaime and Máxima are not just dreaming. Dreams are not separated out from the rest of their lives. Their dreams and their lives are interwoven, comprising a single fabric of experience. The radical value of peasant experience itself is the power which affirms their lucha and challenges the monstrosities of transnational mines and State violence. Simply by valuing their dreams as a source of truth the peasants are defying hundreds of years of colonial oppression. The situation of the Chaupe’s resonates powerfully with the final words to Galindo’s chapter on the
dream-inspired revolutionary Gabriel Aguilar: “He sought always to overcome… seeking that his
dreams meet with history and in this way, imagination subverts reality.” (174)

In another dream, Máxima goes to the place where her mamacita lives. She finds her
brother behind a stone wall digging with a stick. She comes up next to her brother and she sees he
has killed a snake. He had it caught with a pole and then he threw it away: “And when ya he threw
it away I see that snake that was dead, from the middle of its body it had transformed into a calf
no? It was alive that animal, so I said, ‘how it’s going to change from a snake into a calf’ no? It’s
an ugly animal pue, and it’s going to change into an animal that we raise and that is human for us?
And after that dream ya I saw that it was a snake and just then it was coming closer and with my
left foot I felt the snake approach, like this, it covered the foot and I had a scare. My foot threw
itself and I woke up and ya I couldn’t sleep.” When I pressed Máxima for an interpretation she
said, “There it was revealed to me pue, the serpent, they are the bad people that really are perse-
cuting me no? but inside of that, there are persons also that are in favor of me fighting, for that
appears there, in an animal that a human being raises no? administers, domesticates, like this.”
Máxima’s dream is a vision of danger and intimacy combined into a single monstrous image. The
snake comes back from the dead, perhaps signaling the return of problems they thought had been
resolved. But this monster is even more monstrous because it is partly composed of something so
familiar, that is, it’s partly composed of themselves. It is an image of the lucha as a divided heart.
The peasants are turned against themselves as they sell out to the mine or become ashamed of their
culture for impeding the progress of Peru. Máxima’s dream image perfectly captures, better then
any rational discourse, the alienated intimacy produced by the monster that is Yanacocha, ruptur-
ing people, villages and nature itself.

Other dreams are empowering, strengthening their resolve to fight. Máxima told me:
“And also close to the morning I had another dream that lots of people, I didn’t know them, they were all around me, they wanted to take me out of where I was, to another place. They said, ‘we are going,’ but I couldn’t go, I didn’t want to leave because really I had the dream that…my shoe wasn’t there, I had no sock. What to walk with? So then ya I don’t know, those people attacked me like in games. They tied to catch me, there was commotion like this, they held my arms, I don't know, they shook me, and so, but I didn’t let myself pues, in games I beat them, I beat them in that dream and consequently I hear a youth say, ‘the señora has so much force because really she has beat me,’ and he ordered that another person come hold me, pues, from my arms no? so then to the guy that held me by the arms I made force and I caught the hand of the boy and what pues, I caught the two little fingers of the left hand, and I tore them off, and so, what this dream refers to I don’t know, but it had been in the morning, five in the morning…”

Máxima finds herself surrounded by people. They say, ‘we are going,’ but she can’t go. It seems illogical, they want her to leave without her shoes and socks, almost as illogical as the police, under command of a transnational mining company, ordering you to leave your home. Now the encounter with the police appears as a game, perhaps emphasizing the sense of unreality of the events. A mob of people hold Máxima by her arms, just as the police did. This could be read as a trace of the traumatic experience repeating in her unconscious… but not exactly. It is precisely her valor which keeps this dream from being simply a compulsive repetition. An inner alchemy enables Máxima to transform the experience and rewrite history.182 In her dream, she wins.
“Ama llapallayque llatanawaycho, por amor de dios- rayco” [“Don’t all of you strip me naked, for the love of God.”] From “Six Ravenous Animals Feared by the Poor Indians in This Kingdom” including ‘Serpent- Corregidor’, ‘Lion- encomendero’, ‘Mouse- noble cacique’, ‘Tiger- Spaniards of the tambos,’ ‘Fox- doctrina padre,’ ‘Cat- notary’. [Poma, 1615-1616]
IN HER DREAMS SHE CRIES

Sitting on the side of the large hill Peña de Aguila, named after the eagles who nest there, I hesitated to ask Jaime once again about the pain they’d faced. Each retelling was yet another repetition of the violence, which they would never forget no matter how hard they tried, the questions welling up inside me, goaded by project, justifying to myself yet another intrusion into their lives by the promise that my work will, in some capacity, help. Help that which there is no helping. How many times would they be forced to summon up these grisly details before the camera, microphone or judge? I asked about their dog Pastor and Jaime complied. He told me, Pastor was “un perro recontrabueno [a really great dog]. There aren’t dogs like that anymore. Ya the police would peep out, right there the dog would run at them. The police hated that dog and so they killed him, that is they crushed him with their truck.” I asked about Daniel one more time, for I was never sure what exactly the problem was.

“Part of his lungs were bad.”

“But it happened after no?”

“Yes after. After one year. That is, after they beat us, to the year, it happened to him.”

“So then all year he was good?”

“He was, no no no ya no he wasn’t good but… but ya it happened that he worsened ya passing the year ya. Something like 8 months, there about, it happened to him. He was studying and as he was grabbed by the bad ya no... he left school ya, and until right now he’s lost everything.”

After the police attacks, Daniel Chaupe was in a hospital in Lima for six months with a mysterious illness of the lungs that forced him to quit school. He had been studying at a mining institute, learning to be a mechanic for heavy machinery, not necessarily to work for a mining company, but so it goes in Cajamarca. The Chaupe’s believed Daniel was ill with susto and so, as
is customary, we performed a limpieza for him at the Cortada Chica Lagoon, just behind their house. “Give a call…” for his soul to come back.

I then asked Jaime about an image that stuck in my brain, something he had told me once before about Máxima, “They left her body black as coal no?”

“Yes, the police did this, they hit her, kicked her, punched her, and swung their batons at her body. Her whole body was all pulverized, black, and with the blows they made her black like coal pue no? All that blood had fallen asleep and that made the skin black, but, she showed only her arm for the photo. The rest of her body was all black but as she had misgivings, she could not undress and show where the police had kicked her no? Mainly in the buttocks, the waist, the belly, all that was black from the beatings of the police. She was surrounded by a bunch of them, one would let her go and the other right there grabbed her and hit her. So then I screamed and ran to save my wife, so they don’t hit her and the police in turn went at me to catch me and I ran and they could not grab me. If they grabbed me also, they’d hit me sure thing, they’d kill me, but thank God they couldn’t catch me and I made them jump because I grabbed a stone and I tossed it at them, the ones that were hitting my wife.”

“Ay ay ay… and Máxima has problems sleeping no?”

“Aja sometimes she dreams of when they are beating her. The police come and beat her and she cries pue, in her dreams she cries. She’s sleeping but she’s crying, she is screaming, her body throws itself this way, that way, she has problems when she sleeps pue.”
I ask Máxima if she’s going to the Day of the Woman event in the plaza. She says yes, and asks me if I’ll accompany her to make sure she gets there and back home safely: “they are following us, persecuting us, at any moment they could make us fall in any problem… and there we are.”

This year’s gathering will be held in front of the National Police station. One after another, women get up and take the microphone, their voices booming across the plaza: “Woman from all over the Region have expressed themselves with courage, power and dignity and above all to demand that the economic, political and social rights are fulfilled with true equality between men and women.” But, I think to myself, rights look to the State for a guarantee. What happens when the State fails to fulfill its promise, as in the case of the Chaupe family, where the State has deeply betrayed its citizens? People are left crying for their violated rights, but these cries fall upon deaf ears. In that moment, as they look to the State for confirmation, the people give away their power, obscuring the mechanisms of domination behind an ideology of right. Another woman, this one from the Regional Government, says that often women’s demands are “made invisible because there are no ears for this yet.” I wonder if an event like this is really helping. The Day of the Woman. What about the other 364 days? The rest of the year it’s the Day of Man, the Day of Capital. The woman says the Regional Government is “promoting work and giving equal opportunity to men and women, especially at the level of production in the economic development.” She sites a new requirement that women be included as workers in the maintenance of roads: “they can
bring a cent to the house, that serves a lot, and that the woman know how to administer, know how to work…” Work will set you free. The discourse of development infiltrates even the home:

“The woman is she who gives help in the house, but not as a collaboration. The woman is she that gives everything in the house and can administer very well the little that she has and serves as support in the development of the family. I want to take this opportunity to thank the great women that work in the Management of Social Development, who are the ones that have promoted all this movement that we are now living. A big applause for them and all the women that work in each one of the institutions because every day they give their part so that we can give service to the pueblo. We hope that some day all men and women are equal.”

My eyes alight upon the different tents and promotions. “INPE: Cajamarca Penitentiary Establishment”, “ADIAR: Association for the Regional Alternative Integral Development: forging the buen vivir of families in unfavorable situations,” “MINSA: Regional Hospital of Cajamarca”, “Judicial Power of Peru: Justice program in your community.” There are kids with popsicles and everybody seems to be holding purple balloons that say “EsSalud: social health insurance of Peru.” Then I see Máxima’s image. She’s there smiling with her lucha fist held high. The Laguna Azul is behind her a sublime blue. Above her head read the words: “Regional Hospital of Cajamarca: always thinking of your health.” No mention of Máxima’s name, the Laguna Azul, or her struggle. I point out the banner to Máxima. She is surprised, then offended. We head over to see what’s up and are confronted by a bureaucratic nitwit behind a desk. Máxima’s friend Dina is the first to speak: “You know that in order to use the photo of a woman, first we have to know who she is. You have to give the people an explanation: why the señora is fighting, she comes from far away, and now we are about to have her hearing on the 10th of March and I think that we should also be aware of it, not only hang her image. She is the señora Máxima Chaupe. Do you know what she is fighting for? She is the defender of water.”

Man: “You have muchísima razón. Señora were you treated in the Regional Hospital?”

Máxima: “No, when I was attacked by the personnel of Yanacocha mining, I came here to Cajamarca, to the Regional Hospital and they did not even treat me.
They told me to file a complaint and how am I going to do that if I was impossibil-ized? How am I going to take myself to my district? So I had to travel to Celendín, but however, now my image is here and that should not be.”

A smug professional-looking woman comes over to us. Dina and Máxima both say, “Hello, doctor.” The woman responds: “There was a meeting in which they chose from several photos and the señora is the most appropriate. That’s why they have put her there.”

Dina: “She is the most appropriate because she has lawsuits against her…”
Doctor: “No, no, no. At the time they chose, they didn't know who she is. By chance they grabbed it.”
Máxima speaks up, telling her sorrowful tale once again: “They hit me, they beat me. I was injured and I came here to the hospital but they closed the doors on me.”

Doctora: “Listen, listen, it says, ‘Always thinking of your health. Greetings to the Cajamarquina woman on the International Day of the Woman.’”
I finally explode: “But this is false because when she went to the hospital they did nothing for her. Your own police beat her!”
Doctora: “Excuse me sir, we are health workers, our priority is the health of all the population. It seems to me that this is not the moment caballero to touch on a topic like this one. Don’t create a bad atmosphere for us in our Cajamarca. Don’t worry, señor, right this moment we are going to take the banner down, ya, if it causes you annoyance. Because the Cajamarquino is content, ya! But if it causes you annoyance, I am going to take it down.”

Santi: “Not all Cajamarquinos are content.”
Máxima: “I am Cajamarquina, I am in the lucha with everyone.”
Man: “There is no need to cause a problem on the Day of the Woman. There is no need to spoil the day.”
I try to tell them how the police beat her, killed her animals, destroyed her home: “It’s a horrible case!”
Man: “Ya! But there is no need to make a scandal.”
Santi: “The scandal is what they have done to her.”
Man: “We wanted to put her photo for the Day of the Woman, for her day…”
Máxima: “Yes but my name should be there. It should say why my photo is there, but it doesn’t. It’s cause I am a campesina. I don’t know how to read, but they should at least ask me in this respect no?”

The banner is taken down and we walk away slowly from the Regional Hospital tent. Just then we hear the announcer’s voice call out, “We invite the señora Máxima Acuña Aguilar, better known as the señora Chaupe…” Aguilar? They got her name wrong!
Máxima goes up and takes the microphone: “In the first place, greeting here to my pueblo of Cajamarca for the day of today which is the Day of the Woman, that we are in the lucha and also I want to say to all my compañeras from Cajamarca and other provinces that find themselves here, to give them greetings, to give them ánimo [spirit], that as Cajamarquina women we should go with our heads raised and never cower before the mining companies that come to destroy our territory, that come to destroy our Natures that there are in our Cajamarca, that come to contaminate our waters, that come to kill all the pueblo of Cajamarca, and for this I am here this day offering these few words and I hope you’ll excuse me.”

The announcer takes the microphone, “The silent woman, present in the struggle, an example of an organized woman, defending the social rights of humanity and the world.” The silent woman!?! That must mean something like, ‘the quiet woman.’ An organized woman? I wouldn’t call Máxima organized. She’s not one of the organizers of the resistance. She’s the living myth. Silent, organized, these words say more about the macho culture in Peru than it does about Máxima. They betray an obsession with Law, Order, Rationality, and Regulation. Even on the Day of the Woman, even though the announcer is a woman, the dominant, male values remain.

Then we hear the sound of feet stomping and many voices chanting heavily together. I don’t understand the words but I know it’s the cops. Thud thud, thud thud, thud thud: the stamp of their boots makes an intimidating mass of thunder. They turn the corner and emerge into view: white shirts, black pants and a cap. They all wear the same thing, except for their commanders all in black, positioned upfront and behind. With their call and response chanting they dominate the city. The women are up front, looking as man-like as possible. They have to look like men, it’s not the other way around. I feel bad for their out of place breasts. And so, the police come chugging
down the street, running in formation. They clog the road and block traffic. Everybody stops what
their doing for a moment as the police run by.

I invite Máxima to lunch. She tells me a story as we eat our fried trout and potatoes:

“The story of the Devil, he fell in love with a señor a. The señor a said to
him, ‘if you suit me, if you love me, do what I tell you.’
‘What am I going to do?’ is what the Devil said.
She sent him to bring water in a sieve. ‘Bring me water in this sieve. If you
bring the water over here, I accept you.’ They say that, yup the Devil he collected
the water and pum all of it passed through. He gathered it full but again it finished,
again he returned and she wasn’t there when he arrived, not for a thousand devils
would she have stayed. The woman won.”
“Shhhiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiittttt.”
“That’s why they say, the story, the saying, ‘if the woman beat the devil
what would she do to a man?’”

This story expresses Máxima’s brand of feminism better than any theoretical proclamation
ever could. For Máxima, feminism is not an ideology or a discourse but an experience, an experi-
ence which overthrows ideology. She lives it with every breath. She fights with who she is: a
jalqueñita, a peasant woman from the highlands. The Devil, the master of deception, is no match
for a woman! Remember, in the Bible it is Eve who is deceived by the Devil, which leads to the
Fall of both herself and Adam. But in Máxima’s tale, it’s the woman that wins, going in the face
of thousands of years of sexual oppression. Her cunning is affirmed! It is a revaluation of the status
of women. In all of these stories there is a sexual implication. In Máxima’s story, the Devil falls
in love with the woman. In the folk song “Old Lady & The Devil” by Bill and Belle Reed, the man
and the Devil try to make an exchange of the woman but it is a bad deal because the woman revolts.
She’s unexchangeable, splitting the brain of one little devil with a hatchet and paddling the old
man’s head with a butter stick. Need it be said, the Devil is a quintessential Man. These victories
of women over the Devil get at the doubleness which women hold within dominant Western cul-
ture. As Simone de Beauvoir writes, “She incarnates all moral values, from good to evil, and their
opposites.” (197) In many parts of Peru, women are either imagined to be beauty queens or * putas* [whores], ideal or base. The mother, with her archetype in the Virgin Mary, is desexualized. Woman is a primal incarnation of the Other, but in these folk stories and songs the Other is revalued not to be equal to man but, through cunning and strength, to retain her difference, which is also her freedom and sexual power.184

Marisol de la Cadena’s article *Women Are More Indian* is illuminating in how it subverts the standard ethnic and gender identities, showing them to be much more fluid than the fixed categories let on: “According to the hegemonic regional ideology, ‘Indian’ and ‘mestizo’ are closed, bipolar constructions, standing in diametric opposition.”185 Someone is either Indian or mestizo and yet, she insists, the categories are actually fluid and protean: “The categories of Indian and mestizo are inherently relational.”(331) In daily life, a person has “almost limitless possibilities to construct, and mix, Indian and/or mestizo identities.” (331)

“The Chitapampino merchant who prepares to leave his community in the morning for the city is considered mestizo in his village, as he gives orders in Quechua to the workers who stay behind tending his crops and chats in Spanish with the other passengers in the truck bound for Cuzco. Once he arrives in the city, however, the wholesaler looks at him as an Indian and treats him as such, giving him orders in Quechua while speaking to others in Spanish.” (331-332)

The hierarchies built upon ethnicity are also built upon gender, with indigenous women at the very bottom, “the last link in the chain of social subordination: they are the least ethnically or socially mobile, and their Indian identity approaches closure.”(333) But I’m left with an overwhelming question: is anybody ever proud to be an Indian? Ever proud to be a woman? Where does resistance express itself? Is everyone caught in the rat race? What if everyone is mestizo, as is the case in Cajamarca? Then it becomes more an issue of peasants versus progress. Due to the resistance, more people have become proud of their rural identity, proclaiming themselves Indians. And a similar revaluation has occurred with women. The fight for Conga has become a fight for
feminism. Women are revalued into a powerful image a *luchadora* [fighter], *guardiana* [guardian], and *rondera*. In the *lucha*, women have more freedom, going out to meetings alone despite the fact that their husbands may disapproved. Women lead the chants during the marches, manage the *olla comun* [common pot], and often get in front when there are confrontations with the police, in order to protect their men folk. Women *Rondas* have formed in Bambamarca and in Cajamarca, and there is the new Association for Women in Defense of Life, of which Máxima is a member. For many people it’s not just a fight against the mine, but against the entire oppressive system spanning 500 years. People recognize it’s also a fight for gender, race, class, and environmentalism or, as they would put it, women, indigenous, peasants and Mother Earth. The different struggles begin to converge against a common enemy. Visiting scholars from Lima spoke of eco-feminism.

After Lunch, Máxima was invited to a Frente Amplio meeting as the guest of honor. I can see her tired face. There were some strange blue swirls smudged on the wall behind her head, almost depicting her swirling, bubbling psyche, or angel wings but of water. There’s Máxima, sitting with her near-constant smile. As Yamile, a student doing her doctoral fieldwork on the resistance of Cajamarca, said, “There have been lots of teachings in this struggle, this worthy struggle, and a teaching of Máxima that surprised me is how she is able to continue smiling. I am enchanted by her smile, because somebody who passes through all this and still gives me a smile, that is her struggle and her resistance and Máxima continues smiling.” Another man thanked Máxima:

“I feel moved because I see in her face not only the face of a run-of-the-mill indigenous peasant woman. I see in her face my own mother, my grandmothers, that suffered mistreatment not only from their husbands but also from this oppressive system of which we are part. *Muchas Gracias, Mama Máxima Chaupe, Muchas Gracias*. [everyone applauds] I am a Quechua speaker, I am from Porcón. She does honor to her sir name ‘chaupe’ which in Quechua signifies ‘the center’, the central part, the most important part of something and in this conjunction Máxima is the center of the fight for life, for water, and for our environment. In this
moment, she incarnates the resistance, without diminishing the leadership of our brothers like Edy Benevidas, like Milton Sanchez among others, but she incarnates it as a woman and I ask her, Sister Máxima, that never let pass through your heart this eagerness to betray our pueblo. If it’s poor, maintain yourself poor together with the pueblo because the greatest and richest is that your name is not going to die throughout our history. It will be eternally in the books, in the society, in the colleges, in the mouths of the students and professors.”

**TROUT FISHING**

We go down to the Blue Lagoon to move the cows and sheep, yanking out their stakes and leading the animals to new patches of grass. Maribel, still knitting a sweater, with radio and red bucket… for trout. The media has said that there are no fish in the lagoons, one journalist said they are full of faeces.186 “Go to the sheep! Go to the sheep!” Maribel chases Manzanilla the dog away with stones. “It’s going to rain a shitload!” They make a dam of rocks and dirtgrass clumps to lower the water in the stream and pools. Through the mist, along ravines, algae streaming… across tan greenbrown hills, tiny white flowers in moss, thorny palm growth, purple, gold, green, cow paddies and horse dung. More quesillo and biscocho [cheese and biscuits] while waiting for the water to lower. The wind moving through the grass. Rain, splashing from my sombrero as I bend to write. Holes in the ground, sound of rushing water down below.

Máxima and Maribel slip sticks into the eroding darkness, the stream’s underbelly, to scare out trout.

“There are none!”
“Bad luck!”
“All the trout are going to beat us!”
“The water is so high!” [/altaso!]

On the radio I hear a plug for the Regional Government: “creating opportunities of permanent development.” Spending One Hundred and Ten Million nuevos soles to propel tourism. “A
new model of development is possible in Cajamarca. Regional Government of Cajamarca: betting on the permanent development of our people.”

The mine had been working here. Now it seems like an abandoned moon camp. Strange artifacts were left behind: a white metal box by the Azul Lagoon for guachiman [guards] to sit in. We find more, what look like yellow sci-fi telephone booths toppled over… four of them scattered on the hillside.

“Gringo get down here and help us!” I put my notebook down and slide into the ravine. One gets past Maribel and then it gets past Máxima too! Chasing after splashing laughing trout, they catch it. In the black rivet, trudging upstream, swallowed in the dry grass.

“How many have you caught?”

“One. Four have beat us.”

Catching trout by hand. The shock of cold water as your hands and arms shoot in. Something of an ecstasy, slipping through your fingers, slippery silver through your fingers…

Back at the house, Máxima lamented about the miners while she cleaned and cooked the fish: “They do it without a thought for God and without a thought for the human. All that. I’m going to walk. I’m going to fight, them with their money and me with the truth, thinking of God, me with my documents.” There was something prophetic about her voice, something which consecrated her judgement and justified her struggle. She will never surrender her dignity. She told us a story about when the family was held at gunpoint:

“...The engineer Guillermo Silva mocked me and gave his dog a cookie and then a little later he picked it up and gave it to my son who now is in the military, he gave him the cookie, but I don’t know, a valor came to me, my son was about to throw it in his mouth because he was hungry. ‘Give it to me, son,’ I told him, ‘gimme it, because if you don't eat this cookie you’re not going to die.’ I grabbed and took the cookie away from him. ‘Take it,’ I told the engineer, ‘my son is not a dog,’ I told him. ‘Why did you do that?’ I asked him, ‘I am poor, if sometimes I drink water I will drink it and if not I will walk but never in life will you win,’ I
told him, ‘you will not win, but I will because I am with the truth and with my documents at hand.’ I did not let my son eat the cookie. My son stayed there standing. ‘We will drink water,’ I told him, ‘because we only have water here.’ We had nothing else. Only water. And with God's blessing, like they say in Celendín, well *ya pue* the judges do what they want, as they say *ya* they did it for the money, but wherever I went, people gave to me. They invited me to eat bread which was enough for me, I would eat breakfast, lunch and dinner and I would go home. I didn't have money to come by car, I had to come from Celendín by foot. I would arrive at three, two in the morning. Alone. And many have said to me, ‘what if they find you and kill you?’ I told them, ‘God will see, if I am doing something bad, they'll kill me, but if not... well if they kill me cause I'm walking let them kill me..and that's how it’s been. Well now I find that I'm a little calmer, happier, well a little bit more, like I've said I have not lost fear of everything, but with whom? with the will of God, of our father who lives in heaven.”
4. TEARS AND LAUGHTER IN THE COURT

Figure 4.1
"The case of the Chaupes is not the only one. There are many similar cases no? where the mine enters the lands and simply says, ‘This \textit{ya} I buy it.’ In fact they exhibit documentation that they have bought from certain persons, not necessarily those that live there, and they end up throwing the residents from their places where they have lived for years, that is, it’s not the only case. But that’s why it constitutes precisely an emblematic case because it represents what various times goes repeating, no?"

— Mirtha Vasquez, defense attorney for the Chaupe family

For all present, December 17, 2014 seemed to be a historic day. After four years of litigations, including two lost trials and two victorious appeals, the Chaupes were finally acquitted of all criminal charges. The skies opened up and as protestors danced in the street, you couldn’t tell rain drops from tears of joy. But didn’t we all have an inkling that it would never be so easy? Yanacocha is challenging the decision and has even indicated in the media that it will be more “energetic” the next time it defends its property. Already there have been numerous extralegal incidents.¹⁸⁷

How did this mess start? After the police tried to evict the Chaupe family on May 24 and August 8th of 2011 the Chaupes charged Yanacocha with usurpation, once at the First Criminal Court of Celendín on May 25, 2011, and then again on August 10th 2011, to the media and to the Defensoría del Pueblo. On August 11th, 2011 came the third and most brutal attempt at eviction. That same day, August 11, 2011, the District Attorney’s Office archived the case of the Chaupe family. The next day, August 12th, 2011, Yanacocha reversed the accusation of usurpation against the Chaupe family and on August 13, 2011 the criminal trial against the Chaupe family began.

The key to understanding the trial is the legal distinction between \textit{possession} and \textit{property}. The crime of usurpation is committed when one party takes another party’s \textit{possession}. Legally, usurpation has nothing to do with \textit{property}. What matters is who had possession of the land, and who threw who off. But in the first trial, as Mirtha told me, the mining company won because it
proved that it was owner of the land: “I always disputed that theme. Here property is not disputed, here what is disputed is who was on the land ¿no?” She said Yanacocha never proved that it had possession. “The first sentence was extremely irregular, it did not have enough juridical elements and even so they sentenced them.” On October 29th 2012, Máxima and her family were found guilty of illegal occupation. They were sentenced to three years' suspended prison term and ordered to pay 500 soles in compensation to Yanacocha. In August 2013, a court annulled that ruling. Now it was the second trial and Mirtha exposed the same irregularities at work: “The Public Ministry has emitted an erroneous accusation centered only in the determination of the property element. They have offered as evidence the property titles of the mining company Yanacocha but however they have not demonstrated any objective act of possession.” At the conclusion of the second trial, the Chaupes were sentenced to four years of suspended prison term and the payment of 5,500 soles in civil reparation.

Much of the Prosecutor’s badgering derives from this basic intent: show how ignorant the family is. The humiliation supports the claim that the family doesn’t know what they’re talking about. They were never on the land. Yet Mirtha stresses, “when the accused were interrogated in the stage of preliminary investigation, they specified how the community is composed, which ver-
ifies that, yes, they were in possession and they know the land and know where they are living.”

**SCENE 1: In which Didi brings the Judge a coke**

The Judge is drinking a Coca Cola. He doesn’t even seem to be paying attention, reading something & marking it with a pen. He now looks up, wipes his face, presses his hands to his face. He looks dead bored, like he’s falling asleep. The Prosecutor with pursed lips, nodding, head back.
The young hotshot lawyer for Yanacocha is biting his nails, wiping his face. He’s got a green ribbon around his neck. The others have gold metals and stars around their necks.

Three apes in suits. The court appears civilized, both sides are able to speak, yet it’s so barbaric. They keep asking the Chaupes to elaborate upon how they were beaten. Inane questions repeat and repeat. It’s psychological torture. The Peruvian flag and the Judicial Power flag are both shrouded in plastic and stuck in either corner behind the Judge.

The Judge asks Didi to brings him another coke. Didi reminds the Prosecutor to speak into the mic. She’s the court reporter, in charge of recording the trial. She puts one ear to the headphones but really can’t be bothered. On the Judge’s desk is a clock and a gold Christ on a wooden cross. I keep falling asleep, Jorge nudges me. Two golden retrievers on a calendar on the Judge’s desk. Water mold spotted dots stain the wall. Hunched shoulders, abogado de mierda. The Prosecutor acts like a lawyer of the company. We call him the Prosecutor of Yanacocha. He’s bald and fleshy with bags under his eyes, leathery cheeks with blackheads like a money purse. Physiognomy= Shitbag. The young Yanacocha lawyer doesn’t talk much. He shakes hands with Marco Arana, “A los tiempos...” cause the prick used to work for GRUFIDES.

In one of his endless droning avalanches of legal jargon, the Prosecutor says the State makes the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Padre Marco and Jorge laugh quietly to themselves. The Judge calls the Prosecutor on it. Jorge and Marco are shaking their heads with embarrassment. Jorge turns red. It is Yanacocha that makes the EIA! Not the State! The State approves the EIA, at least that is how it’s supposed to work but the Prosecutor has just shown, through a slip of the tongue, what the actual corrupt process is. We all know that Yanacocha approved its own EIA. My knees knock against the wood bench in front of me.
And just like that: *affect* breaks out. “Please calm yourself!” The Judge rings his bell. Didi brings Máxima a cup of water.

**A WILL TO POWER IS MISTAKEN FOR A WILL TO KNOWLEDGE**

“…a spectral content only truly exists as such from the moment when the milieu that contains it defines itself through its intolerance toward that which appears in it as a crime. The strongest repulsion by science that can be represented is necessary for the characterization of the excluded part. Such a characterization must be compared to the affective charge of an obscene element whose obscenity derives only from the prohibition leveled against it.”

— Georges Bataille, *The Pineal Eye*, p. 81

There are protocols which dictate the nature of the court proceedings and which are fundamental to the functioning of institutions. Since these are imposed by history's victors and enforced with power and violence, all must submit to their logic. Accommodation is not made for the vanquished. Everyone will play THE/THEIR game. The whole show may be dressed up in enlightenment costumery but any outsider/target will fail to find much comfort in that.

“We don’t know about justice”, “I don’t even know how is a justice”, or as one of Máxima’s songs goes, “There’s no justice for the poor.” The Chaupes’ words come from a place of utter exclusion. The legal system was never meant for people such as these. It is a farce of legality, which breaks down when confronted with human feeling. There is a rational limit which is constantly battered against. Exact knowledge of property boundaries, building materials, or prior owners will never satisfy the Law, whose only real concern is Power. The events can not be sufficiently *known*. Knowledge is insufficient. There is always a residue, the hidden excesses of affective life. And anyway the Law has already made up its mind that the Chaupes are guilty. There is a whole subterranean world of phantasy at work in the court, attribution and counter-attribution between
Self and Other. But communion or common feeling must be excluded, so the same questions and the same answers are repeated over and over again. The grisly details of being beaten, threatened at gun point, and dispossessed, repeat and repeat as they hit against this limit. As if the court is actually designed to make communication impossible. And when emotion breaks through the court shuts down.

Nietzsche was not surprised by his contemporaries repeated attempts “to sanctify revenge under the name of justice.” He dismisses the claim that justice merely developed from the feeling of being aggrieved. He rejects this interpretation of justice which rehabilitates “not only revenge but all reactive affects in general.” Nietzsche says that our sense of “scientific fairness” proceeds directly from the spirit of ressentiment (for the benefit of hatred, envy, jealousy, mistrust, rancor, and revenge): “For this ‘scientific fairness’ immediately ceases and gives way to accents of deadly enmity and prejudice” when confronted with the “truly active affects, such as lust for power, avarice, and the like”\textsuperscript{188} In contrast to thinkers who argue that “the home of justice is to be sought in the sphere of the reactive feelings”, Nietzsche exclaims, “the last sphere to be conquered by the spirit of justice is the sphere of the reactive feelings!” When the just woman remains just even towards those who have harmed her, “when the exalted, clear objectivity, as penetrating as it is mild, of the eye of justice and judging is not dimmed even under the assault of personal injury, derision, and calumny, this is a piece of perfection and supreme mastery on earth.” (74) The courtroom of Celendín was swarming with these reactive affects, where active aggressiveness and arrogance was cloaked under a veil of rationality and civility.
SCENE 2: They beat me on my ankles

The nightmare of history is the endless repetition of the same. The Prosecutor asks the same questions over and over again, cutting ever finer incisions into her soul. Máxima tells how she wasn’t present on the 24th of May, she’d gone to visit a family member in Agua Blanca because they told her, “come do me a service, weave my fabric,” so she went and Jaime remained there alone. The Prosecutor needs clarification: “That is, you went to attend a request that you make a fabric?” And Máxima’s response is just perfect, “Yes because I live weaving.”

Prosecutor: “Like this you support your husband with the fabric?”

Máxima explains to him, “Aja for example I spin, I weave some thing, I make artisanal crafts in order to support my husband.” Through Máxima’s words there is a glimmer of cultural difference. It is her way of life which is at stake here. Her being a campesina is actually the foundation of her problem with the mine. And how far away is Agua Blanca? Two hours by foot. The Prosecutor asks, “When you returned to the house from Agua Blanca what did you observe? What happened? At what hour did you return?” Máxima, with her down-to-earth sensibility exposes all the trickery and stupidity at the base of the Prosecutor’s assault on her: “I observed that they covered the ditches and I saw that they knocked over the limits. I observed that there was one choza but my husband, as they left him half-bad, he doesn’t remember much. There was a choza that they had taken apart and burned the straw.” A moment ago she was sharing her means of livelihood, but suddenly she slips back to the unavoidable, unforgettable, the brutal wounds which are continuously prodded and poked, never left to heal, ever to repeat and break forth anew as the horrific ghoulishness leaks out into the broad daylight of the courtroom.

Her indignation rising, she emphasizes the difference in means between herself and the miners, “…and these señores what is it that they have? They have their machines, they have their
cellular, they have their cameras,” and in a sort a free association, she moves from one injustice to another, “Never did they take the photos from the position that we needed. They took the photos where there is nothing in order that they can say that recently, only recently we made our home there…” Her voice is unabashedly colored with peasant accents, what the legal authorities see as a sure sign of her inferiority: she pronounces nusutrus, or onde instead of donde, dropping the ‘d’, or comiay instead of ‘yo comia’ and ‘criao’ instead of ‘criado’, again dropping the ‘d.’ The result is a sort of cooing, a deeply heartfelt cooing. Such music in language, but to the bastions of culture it only sounds like shit. It is total war, a full on confrontation between different codes, such that the way the Chaupes talk, the way they build their house, where they live, their intimacy with the land, animals, crops and the phases of the moon, the waters and the lagoons, their intimacy with each other, sleeping together with the parents, children and even the children’s girlfriends and boyfriends all in the same makeshift bed of blankets piled up on the dirt, their intimacy with death, as the foxes steal a rabbit or as they gut a cuy for a special meal, the fact that they chew coca, their illiteracy… all these become points of vulnerability and attack, points of devaluation and revaluation. This war takes place at the level of the everyday code of signs. We are witness to a clash of world views, a clash of different languages, a clash of codes (codes of behavior, emotion, feeling).

The Prosecutor now tries to prey on Máxima’s peasant ignorance, “Señora you say that the community has given you a certificate of possession no? And do you have exact knowledge of what you are speaking to me about? Do you know those measurements well? What’s the extension of the land that they gave you in the document? Are you aware of that?” Máxima begins to respond, “In the document of compraventa that the señor give us…” and is cut short by the Prosecutor, “No pardon, of possession.” Máxima begins again, “In that of possession, bueno, I have no knowledge
because I don’t know as I said…” This time Mirtha objects. The Prosecutor begins again, “Señora de Acuña, what is the size of your property? That is, dimensions, measurements, do you know?”

MÁXIMA: “That’s why I was saying that in the certificate of compraventa that we have, what we know with regards to the document is that…”

Again the Prosecutor cuts her off, “No you ya have already said to me that you don’t remember the document but do you know the size of your land?”

“That is, the land, that’s what I am talking to you about.”

“No, continue.”

“That is, please forgive me, as I’m saying, you all talk to me in a more detailed way and in turn, I don’t know, that’s why I am saying in the document of the certificate of compraventa there it talks, says 1500 of length by head and foot, 800 of width.”

After all that stunted speak, and even while excusing her peasant ignorance, she still nails the question. So the Prosecutor decides to move on and continue torturing her, forcing her to repeat her account of horror: “Tell me Señora Acuña when the señores members of the National Police came to Tragadero Grande on the 9th of August or 10th of August, what effects? You had some problem? Some damage? Some physical effect they have caused you or your family?” It is truly outrageous how many times they make the Chaupes repeat their traumatic experiences. I sat there in the courtroom with my head in my hands, asking myself, how many times can they possibly ask them to relive this violence? In a feverish, hysterical eruption the trauma returns: “Of course pue! That’s why I’m telling you, they had us there physically, psychologically, you know? Three police assaulted my 16 year old son with their machine guns, that he don’t run, that he don’t scream, when my son, seeing that they beat us, he screamed, and that he keep silent, they told him, they cornered him between three, is this not physically? They assaulted my son and on the other end, they beat my husband, they hit him, but our problem was that we don’t have money, we don’t have plata [silver], we can’t mobilize ourselves for the medical exams in order to get them for the whole family, only I went and my daughter who they hit with the rifle butt in her brain and tossed on the ground. So then, they beat me on my ankles, I could not walk…”

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“Very good Señora.”

“…I could not walk to this province of Celendín.”

And once the heat gets turned up too high and a downpour of tears come, the eternal refrain is heard, “Señora calm yourself,” just enough so that she regain her ability to speak, then the entire grotesque madhouse (under a strict guise of rationality) can begin again. From the top! She may not have gone to school, she may not be able to read, but Máxima’s critique is dead on, “our problem is that we don’t have money.” What’s shocking is not only the repetition itself but how no one seems to hear her. Experience is transformed into mere information.

**AN INCOMPETENT JUDGE AND A CORRUPT PROSECUTOR**

The first trial was outrageous. A corrupt Prosecutor, an incompetent Judge, the Chaupes sentenced to 4 years of *pena privativa* and the payment of civil reparation to Yanacocha! Hearing the sentence, Máxima fainted. She had to be admitted to the Celendín hospital.

Mirtha Vasquez told me, “That last judge was pathetic, asking her secretary ‘what do I do? What do I do?’ She didn’t even have knowledge of basic things about the trial. She didn’t know how to conduct the trial for the crime she was judging.” The judge would say, “the mine has property titles and you don’t,” and Mirtha would say, “Doctora, review not only the norms but also the doctrine, who’s the property owner of this land is not discussed here, in this trial they discuss who was on the land and who entered to violate this possession, that is, what is discussed is possession, not property.’ And she didn’t understand.” Mirtha laughs, “It’s a basic theme that they teach to all lawyers, that in usurpation we never confuse, one never discusses property.” As Mirtha recounted:

“In the end she issued a sentence that gives me the impression that she hadn’t even prepared it herself no? Because she had deficiencies reading it. At the moment of reading the sentence, she would make mistakes and she’d say, ‘Ay! I don’t know what this refers to.’ No? It was unbelievable. And in the end, she finished sentencing them and when the señora Máxima heard the sentence asking 4
years of suspended sentence and civil reparations, you’ve seen her, she is very emotional ¿no? she despairs and faints. It was a very tense moment for everybody. I didn’t know what to do. I wanted to help her, but I was also very indignant. So we took her out, we asked that they take her to a hospital. The scene was extremely dramatic ¿no? The people enraged and all this ¿no? and the judge gets scared ¿no? and all this charge of conscience comes to her and she calls me over and says to me, ‘But Doctora, I wish the señora wouldn’t act like this because maybe in the second instance…’ First she says this no? ‘I swear I know that they are innocent but lamentably they don’t have proof of that,’ and I said to her, ‘Doctora, how are you going to say they don’t have proof? Besides, they are the accused… you’re the ones who have to prove their accountability. They don’t have to prove their innocence.’ And she said, ‘Yes ay! Yes the señora gives me so much pain. Doctora, in any case, appeal, in the second instance…’ She wanted to transfer the responsibility. She didn’t want to assume it herself. She didn’t want to remain with the charge of conscience. I said to her, “You know what? Yes we are going to appeal,” I said to her, ‘But Doctora, I am indignant that you are condemning innocent people, knowing that they are innocent!’ ¿no? ‘Ay Doctora, I feel bad about this,’ and in that moment she grabbed me and said, ‘but the Fiscalía has the most guilt of all because the Prosecutor had received plata.’ To me she said it, to me. To me she said, “the Prosecutor had received plata.” Then I said, I was so indignant, I said to her, ‘And you endorsed the Prosecutor? You have sentenced knowing that the Prosecutor is corrupt?’ And she said, ‘Ay Doctora, I feel so bad, I don’t know what to do, but ya the sentence is done. It’s done.’ Who had made the sentence? I suspect that the Prosecutor himself, because what they’ve told me is that this judge was so incompetent that she didn’t know how to prepare sentences. She’d pay other people to make them for her. In Celendín there are lawyers no? and the lawyers told me, ‘normally this judge does not take charge, one of us makes the sentence but this time she didn’t give it to us,’ and they themselves told me, ‘I believe that she gave it to the Prosecutor himself so that he’d make the sentence.’ Therefore, the Prosecutor did what he pleased and she only read it. It was clarísimo that she had not prepared the sentence… Can you imagine the level of corruption? A Prosecutor that receives plata. A judge that is incompetent, that doesn’t know how to prepare her own sentences and that in the end someone suggests that it’s the Prosecutor himself who prepared it no?’

Thankfully the appeals court figured it out pretty quick. They asked both the Public Ministry and the mine, “How have you proven that the Chaupes entered the land violently? What was the mine doing there? Do you have possessory acts?” And really, the mine didn’t. The appeal court realized that the sentence was poorly done because the mine did not have sufficient evidence and they decided to declare the process null up until the stage of the oral hearing, that is, “to put it in
simple terms, they decided everything that was done in Celendín, from the trial up until the sentence, is worthless.” As Mirtha put it, “There were all kinds of irregularities. So they declared null and the case returns to the beginning. That’s why the case returned to Celendín and the hearing began again.”

**SCENE 3: I have never abandoned my land**

The Prosecutor asks Jaime, “How many hours do you labor per day?”

JAIME: “Sometimes 12 hours, sometimes 10 hours, sometimes 8 hours and sometimes 6 hours.”

The irregularity of Jaime’s response reflects his peasant lifestyle. It also shows that he has no boss but himself. The prosecutor expects regularized labor with regular hours, but is confronted with only Jaime’s variable hours.

PROSECUTOR: “After your daily labor, do you return to your house?”

JAIME: “Of course.”

PROSECUTOR: “Where is your house?”

JAIME: “Right there, on the land.”

PROSECUTOR: “You don’t have a domicile in another place where you live?”

JAIME: “No.”

PROSECUTOR: “You only live there?”

JAIME: “Yes.”

Interrogation, inquisition: twisting their words. As it didn’t work to get Jaime to admit that he sometimes stays in the other house in Sorochuco, the Prosecutor tries another strategy. “Tell me, do you have periods in which you have abandoned your, this land,” and then he throws in sneakily, “Have you traveled for some motive during this period?” Jaime slips and the first question of whether he ever abandoned his land passes unnoticed.

JAIME: “Ah yes.”

PROSECUTOR: “During that period, pardon, of the 24th of May to the 9th or 8th of August, have you remained permanently there or in some moment did you take leave from the place?”

This time when the question is asked, Jaime catches the Prosecutor’s intention.
JAIME: “No I’ve been there permanently.”
PROSECUTOR: “You’ve never traveled, nor did you leave the place?”
JAIME: “Uhmm ya. Before the 24th of May.”
PROSECUTOR: “Have you left the land, bueno, pardon, have you always been in possession? You’ve never abandoned the land?”
JAIME: “No I have never abandoned my land.”
PROSECUTOR: “You have never traveled?”
JAIME: “Travel yes, I have traveled. Sometimes I would leave to go work.”
PROSECUTOR: “When have you traveled to a place, nearby or far away?”
JAIME: “Far away, in 2010 I traveled to Lima.”

The Prosecutor and Judge want straightforward answers to straightforward questions, but the Chaupes can not help adding their opinions, their judgments, their emotions. They can’t help but add *themselves*. When Jaime is asked by the lawyer for Yanacocha, “what was your attitude with the police?”\(^{189}\), in addition to repeating, “My attitude was to make them see that I have a document and that I am the possessor,” Jaime can not help but to add, “but the police did not accept that. They violently violated. They hit us and that is not the duty of the police.” The Yanacocha lawyer is trying to get Jaime to fall into a trap of admitting that the family acted with violence against the police, but all that is revealed is once again the injustice of the situation, and the heroism of the family. The lawyer asks, “If it’s that the police went violently to mistreat you all as you say, why, to safeguard your integrity, did you not leave the property?”

“¿Como?” Jaime doesn’t even understand the first time, the question seems too obvious. Have they not been listening?

The Lawyer repeats, “For what reason did you all not leave the property to safeguard your integrity?”

And Jaime is reduced to repeating himself as well: “Because it’s my property, nor will I leave it.”

LAWYER: “Therefore you opposed with resistance?”

JAIME: “Yes because I am in my right, in my property, to make them respect my rights.”

LAWYER: “No more questions, Señor Judge.”
GOOD COPS

Jaime and Máxima experience a total lack of recognition before the Law. They’re given the run around. Their winding narratives mirror the labyrinthine experience of bureaucracy, shuffled from one official to the next, doors closed in their faces. As Máxima tells it, when they went to file their charge against Yanacocha, the commissioner told them, “wait a moment, wait a moment,’ a moment, a moment, they had us like this ya… while the commissioner is laying down sleeping in his bed,” until another cop, one with a conscience, shows up and reprimands the commissioner, “‘Why don’t you attend them?’”

During another moment in the trial Jaime refers to the Captain from Lima, the Captain who says, “I see that yes they are here in the possession, it’s the reality but only if they have their document, if not, no.” Jaime presents the document and the good cop says, “you are in your due right, I can not touch them without permission, not even one plant of straw, and how can we pick you up and your animals?” because they were prepared to take the Chaupe’s animals, and in this way the good cop said, “you are countrymen Cajamarquinos,” then he turns to the other police, “and why have you acted in this manner?” said the Captain of the DINOES, “Not even I who is not from here can do things like this to this poor and humble family.” Jaime again repeats the phrase, “said the Captain of the DINOES,” and it is this Captain who urges the Chaupe family, “make your house here, let’s see if they move you from here, because you all are in your right, these engineers are abusive”. This telling of the good cop story occurs spontaneously in answer to a question asked by the Prosecutor: “What materials were used to construct the house?” Jaime begins to answer but traumatic memories overwhelm him, “Yes, ya bueno the carpenter has his… they left me in the pampa when ya there was nowhere to…” Jaime then flies off into his retelling
about the Captain of the DINOES, after which the Prosecutor can only respond, “Good, he has not answered, I am going to continue.” Jaime says, “and so then there…” and the Judge puts an end to it, “Accused, accused, keep silent. Formulate the question so that the accused can understand.”

Who are these good cops? I think Jaime receives a secret satisfaction from this moral condemnation of the police, a public shaming issuing from the mouth of their own Captain. It is important to Jaime that he be recognized by the Law. Consciously or unconsciously, making the Captain of the DINOES speak Jaime’s critique gives it authority that it wouldn’t have coming from Jaime’s mouth. Or maybe it’s just what happened? Is it the seed of a messianic awakening whereby the police once again become protectors of the buen vivir or it is a hint of some lingering faith in the Law on the part of Jaime? Either way, the good cop validates and supports Jaime’s story.

**SCENE 4: The endless repetition of the same**

JUDGE: “Calm yourself, drink water so you can settle down.”

MÁXIMA: “Thank you, thank you, ay ay, I am ok, thank you.”

The Judge asks the Prosecutor if he has further questions. The Prosecutor says to Máxima, “Señora calm yourself, señora Chaupe, pardon, you are Maximina Acuña no?”

MÁXIMA: “Yes, ya talk to me.”

PROSECUTOR: “Madam do you know, can you explain to us what are the limits of this land that you claim as your own, as your property or as your possession?”

MÁXIMA: “We peasants were raised with our parents saying to us, ‘Children, when one buys land, one buys with borders and with documents, with a view of this boundary that the sellers show you. You are going to live in your property and you are going to know to respect the boundary. You can not pass nor them.’”

Rather then explain the limits of her land, she explains the concept of boundaries because, indeed, there seems to be a misunderstanding. Máxima’s answer instantly brings the dialogue back
down to a tender, intimate sense. She gently demonstrates that, in the country, even children are taught such basic knowledge as property boundaries. But such thinking brings her back to the trouble she’s in, and gets her to wondering: “the engineer Guillermo, why did he have to cover the ditch? There was some tall stone markers planted. Why’d they have to knock them down? Now if I had gone outside of this land, if I had gone to the land of the mining company that does not belong to me and still yet aggressively I had entered to knock down the limits, there yes, I’ve done a crime. I ask myself and I don’t know the reason why, just for reclaiming and for valuing my land that belongs to me, they have given me a sentence, they have given me civil reparation and I want to ask, what is the crime that I have [committed]?” She asks the court as if they can hear her, as if it were all just a misunderstanding. It’s almost as if her simple questions should be enough to clear up the whole matter. A humble peasant woman turning the inquisition back on the inquisitors, offering the mirror in which they just might catch a glimpse of *themselves*: “what crime have I committed?” But the Judge quickly brings the trial back to ‘reality’. He interrupts her, “Señora, Señora, that’s not material of this trial. This judgment *ya* was declared null. We are in a new trial. I deduce that your lawyer *ya* has explained to you. Limit yourself to answer the questions. You do not have to worry about this judgment because *ya* it died.” But it has obviously not died for Máxima or her family, who live and relive the crisis every day. Deep in some ring of the inferno, the Prosecutor repeats the question, “the limits were marked by ditches or stone markers?” Máxima begins to answer, “Yes partly ditches…” and is immediately cut short again by the Judge, “Please respond to the question.”

MÁXIMA: “*Yá.*”

JUDGE: “Very kind. Señor Prosecutor, she has not understood the question.”
PROSECUTOR: “But she has spoken a great deal. I would like her to specify for me whether the limit is made with ditches or landmarks? To what do you refer when you speak of ‘limits’ or is it that only your ancestors told you?”

A not so subtle jab at her peasant upbringing, which shades into indigeneity. Máxima repeats that the seller sold the land to them with ditches and stone markers planted around the parcel, “all the parcel,” she emphasizes and a feverish echo is heard, “Around all the parcel?” the Prosecutor asks. “Yes, all the parcel,” she repeats again.

These dramatic monologues occurred again and again wherein Máxima’s voice breaks through the congealed, paralyzed enclosure of the legal bureaucracy. Heedless of the protocol, she speaks out of turn: “I want to ask you señor(es) here, to all of us present, I am a poor woman, a humble woman. Sometimes I live by serving a neighbor in order to support my children in their education even if it is with a little cup of coffee and I do not have enough. Would I have the nerve, I, to come to the mining company’s property, to their land, what it costs them, and knowing that the señor(es) have so many economic resources and knowing they sit with big people of high powers and I’m going to get involved in those problems? No señor.” She speaks through her tears. As if she could level with them. You think she’s dumb enough to mess with the big boys? No señor.

THE DOCUMENTS

I remember when I first saw Máxima. It was during that momentous trip to Lima with the Guardians of the Lagoons. I saw a small campesina woman on the sidewalk, crying and waving her documents to a spectacle of cameras. The photos of the five dead held up behind her. She told how her son Daniel was hospitalized (“He fell sick, impossibilized. He’s conscious of the sense, of the brain, he walks but more he doesn’t recognize, he doesn’t know where he is…”), how the DINOES killed her dog Pastor along with four sheep, leaving two dead in the road and taking two others to have caldo de cabeza or sheep head soup: “¡Assassins! ¡Thieves! The Securitas193 carried
them off to devour them in their trucks on a public highway at 12 in the day… and still the police like vultures going behind the engineers laughing to themselves about me, saying that I’m looking for my big sack [of money] so that they pay me for my dog. It’s an abuse, a joke that they have made.” I stood there in shock and confusion as the woman continued to release her outrage: “They have taken apart my shelters, they have burned my shelters, they have carried off my bed, they have carried off my food, my little things, Mr. journalist you can see how we live, they have lifted all of it, they haven’t left nothing.” Even now, tears well up feeling her desperation and courage.

Throughout the trial we see the repetition of the documents, the magic documents, which supposedly manifest and enact legality. Their magic is especially true for Máxima who, as she repeats many times, can’t read, “not even one letter.” The documents signify Truth, Law and an enduring faith in the System. From the first to the last the documents are always the futile reference, like that first time I saw Máxima, when she clutched and shook her documents in the street, so that we see them, for otherwise they might remain invisible along with the campesina woman crying and waving them before your eyes. Held onto for dear life, the documents are something tangible in this delirium, which obscures the fact that justice is constantly slipping through their fingers. In utter desperation, she always returns to the documents, the documents which should signify some last vestige of a world where things still make sense: “if they kill me in any way in this land the only one responsible are the mining company and the authorities that do not investigate my documents, that do not give valor to my documents. Why did they have to do this, [the denuncia] of the mine they process…” Máxima breaks down crying.

JUDGE: “Calm yourself, drink water so that you can settle down.”

She who can not read and is thus excluded from the System… is only further excluded. The documents should speak the Law to the Law, should speak the Law’s language, the documents
should ensure justice, that is, speak truth to power, which she can not ever hope to do on her own, for she can not be heard.

There is a doubleness to the documents. They *obscure*, in the sense that by holding onto a faith in their truth-value the Chaupe’s stay locked into the State’s game, which the State will always win. But, at the same time, the documents also *make visible* the slipping away of justice. It is the doubleness of the *campesinos* themselves, as both backward heathens and the holders of cultural heritage, just as discourses of ‘social inclusion’ (on the part of the State) and ‘social responsibility’ (on the part of the mine) are the flip side of outrageous abuse and injustice. The documents symbolize this dialectical relationship between the State and *campesinos*. The documents should force the State to recognize and yet they don’t recognize. They mask as well as highlight the failure of the System.

As Ysidora told me, when the police came to evict the family on August 8th, 2011, the Chaupes said to them,

“‘Please what is it you want from us? Show us your documents of some competent authority that has ordered you to come throw us out, that’s what I want. With what document? Who is the boss that is commanding here?’ ‘It’s the engineer such-and-such,’ ‘Which is the engineer? Let’s see, show us. Please who is it? He must present himself, show us his face and give us information.’ So then they threw it around, ‘No, he is the boss, he is the boss,’ we went to him, ‘I am not the boss, he is the boss,’ they threw it around one to the other until they lost their patience and began to shoot to the contrary so then we cried, cried, ‘Help please help us!’ But who’s going to help in this moment? There was nobody! So then they grabbed my Mama between 10 police they grabbed her, they hit her, we have photos so that you all believe us, see the reality that they mistreated my Mama…”

The magical documents: now you see them, now you don’t.

YSIDORA: “Look, just as we have our documents, you’ll also show us your documents in order that you can kick us off, evict us.”
SCENE 5: There’s no community, they sold it

The Chaupes' innocence inadvertently reveals the cracks in the System, like when Máxima declared to the court that there is no longer any community in Sorochuco. The Prosecutor picks up on the point that the property has passed through three hands. “Yes yes,” Máxima responds. The Prosecutor asks her, “Could you tell us, this property or this land, whose land is it?” To which Máxima answers, “this land was the community’s,” but the Prosecutor twists her words around, “Ok it’s the community’s.” Máxima must elaborate, “This community had its authorities and they shared out to the commoners, those who wanted to be possessors, and so those señores grabbed one. After this they sold to another, to a professor, later to yet another señor Esteban, this señor Esteban sold to me.” As if that wasn’t clear as day, the Prosecutor attempts the same manipulation of her words, “Ok so then the land is the community’s no?” But Máxima catches him, she emphasizes, “Had been but ya no, it’s cause ya now they have divided it and each one ya gives precedence to their possession, their land.” The Prosecutor attempts another strategy to mock her, “So then, you know that ya there is no community in Sorochuco, ya the community disappeared?” He does not know the truth of his words but Máxima in her honesty reveals the profundity of his jest, “It’s that ya they sold pue, it’s that ya they shared it out, but the authorities still exist.”

PROSECUTOR: “How? That is, ya there is no community but there are authorities that still exist?”

MÁXIMA: “Of course.”

PROSECUTOR: “Ya that is, ya no community exists in Sorochuco?”

MÁXIMA: “Of course, it’s like I say, they distributed, they sold ya, each one has his parcel.”

PROSECUTOR: “The community has sold to you?”

MÁXIMA: “No, a person sold to me, others ya, the community no. I tell you that they had given it to the first owners.”
PROSECUTOR: “You have not bought from the community?”
MÁXIMA: “No, I have bought from a possessor ya.”
PROSECUTOR: “So then you have not bought from the owner?”
MÁXIMA: “That’s what I’m saying, I buy from the possessor…”
PROSECUTOR: “Therefore you have bought the possession from the possessor?”
MÁXIMA: “Bueno I don’t understand this. Let’s see, what?”

“Ok it’s ok…” the Prosecutor gives up for the moment only to ask Doña Máxima to repeat yet again, “Tell me please what acts have occurred that have psychologically affected you, what concrete acts, why’d you say to us…” Her eruption is the only possible response to such insolence: “Psychologically, with threats saying that they will kill us, they will bring us to justice, that they will dry us like fish, that we’re not worth for nothing, that we have nothing to complain about, that they know the law, that the law is like this. They’re manipulating us in order to not be able to claim that which pertains to us.”

What is going on here? One factor is that the Prosecutor simply wants to exhaust and abuse Máxima, wear her down, get her to slip up and self-incriminate by admitting that she did not buy the land from the proper owner, thus her claim to the land is unfounded. But what is the specific point of law he’s after? The Prosecutor wants to show that the land was owned by the community of Sorochuco, because the community sold a large bloc of land en masse to Yanacocha, so therefore the land is Yanacocha’s because they bought from the legitimate owners. No one cares that Engineer Carlos Cerdán argues that the Chaupe’s land is not within the limits of the property bought by Yanacocha. This revelation was not admitted as evidence due to a legal technicality: it had come to light after a deadline for the admission of new evidence had already passed. As we shall see, this is not the only bit of evidence which was not admitted.
On another level, Máxima voices a critique of private property: “they distributed, they sold \textit{ya}, each one has his parcel.” Her implication is that when the collective land was broken up into individual parcels, the community effectively disappeared. Or in other words, capitalism erodes the basis of society. Two distinct ideas of ‘community’ and ‘ownership’ are clashing here, an indigenous Andean concept based on collectivism and the Capitalist concept of private property. By ‘community’, the Prosecutor means the physical presence of the village, that’s why he can’t believe his ears, but Máxima means the \textit{sense} of community: communal work and collective ownership of land. In this sense, there’s no community. Of course in other moments of the trial, Máxima is forced to defend a notion of private property because she must speak their language, the language of the law. She doesn’t want to lose her land. But if we are attentive we can catch a glimpse of this clash of world views.

With the Agrarian Reform of 1969 the lands of the \textit{haciendas} and the Church\textsuperscript{194} were redistributed to peasant cooperatives. As Máxima says, the land was “given” to its first owners. These lands were subsequently sold out to particular families.\textsuperscript{195} Máxima knows that the Community handing over land doesn’t count in a court of law. What \textit{seems} to count is ownership of property due to a commercial transaction, with the corresponding documents. With his relentless questions the Prosecutor wants to trip her up: “So then you have not bought from the owner?” That’s the point of law which he is after. As Máxima states in her testimony, “They sold this land to me. It’s not that the authorities of the community had given it to me, had given it to me perhaps for being a commoner, for this, but that I bought it with effort, with work, suffering…” But this is all utterly absurd: \textit{property} is not at issue in this trial, \textit{possession} is!
THE RABBIT AND THE FOX

One time, when I was alone with Jaime for two weeks up on the Chaupe’s land near the Azul Lagoon, he told me this story while we peeled potatoes.

JAIME: “A Señor had his garden pue of vegetables, that is lettuce, it had onion, cabbage… and it dawned they say every bit ruined pue the garden. ‘What do I do?’, asked the owner, ‘What do I do?’ What’d he do? He gathered candles, wax and made a statue like a doll and put it at the entrance. And so the Rabbit arrived at the garden. ‘Jua,’ he says, ‘What is this?’ He gave it a punch, ‘he’s going to win me over is he?’ He gives it a punch and the punch stays planted in the doll of wax pue. Stuck there. Again they say he gave it a punch with the other hand ya? Stuck there ya. Again they say that he gave it a kick. Stuck there. Immediately they say that he gave it a big head-butt. So then the Rabbit was stuck there. So then the owner arrived in the morning and he finds the Rabbit there, stuck in the trap ya… ‘Ah pendejito196, so it was you who ate all my garden.’ All this time the Rabbit’s been real quiet. The Señor brings the Rabbit to his house, ‘Ya pue, now I have to eat you,’ they say that he said to him, the owner of the vegetable garden to the little rabbit and so then he tied the Rabbit to the pillar and he goes inside to heat up a nail and the Fox appeared, ‘What’s up nephew, they’ve tied you up jajaja. For being a pendejo you have gotten yourself tied up there.’ ‘No uncle,’ the Rabbit says, ‘they’ve tied me up here because I don’t want to marry his daughter.’ ‘Puta197, truth nephew?’ ‘Truth, I don’t want his daughter’ ‘But she’s pretty?’ ‘Yes pue, she’s lovely but I don’t want to get married.’ So then the Fox says to him: ‘Listen, tie me up… I untie you and you tie me up’, puta and the Rabbit ties the Fox up pue, and the Rabbit gets outta there and the Fox stays on the pillar. The Señor comes out from inside, they say, with a heated up nail: ‘What? You became a Fox?’, they say he said, ‘Bitch, here you fucked yourself cholo198.’ They say that he sent the heated nail up the Fox’s ass. So then the Fox said, ‘Uncle I’ll marry her… Uncle I’ll marry her’ ‘Like hell you will! You married with the nail’ They say he said and he killed him. That’s all.”

The story of the Rabbit and the Fox is playing itself out in the court room. There is a series of reversals and reciprocal fuckings: (1) Rabbit fucks Farmer (ruining his garden); (2) Farmer fucks Rabbit (catching Rabbit in a trap); (3) Rabbit fucks Fox (Rabbit tricks Fox into switching places); (4) Farmer fucks Fox, literally, to death. Clearly the peasants would prefer to identify with
the Rabbit, the cunning Rabbit who can talk his way out of any fix. But there is also an identifica-
tion with the Fox. The Fox is a fool who, trying to be a clever, outsmarts himself. The Fox is the
Andean archetype of the loser. The peasants probably identify with the farmer too, in the ideas of
private property and unjust justice (the Fox is punished for the Rabbit’s crimes). But it is not as
simple as the Fox, the Rabbit or the Farmer stand for the Chaupes, the Prosecutor or the Judge.
There’s no one-to-one correspondence. The story is more a reflection of the awareness that the
potential for trickery is ever present and the roles of tricker and tricked can always be reversed.199

In the reversal of power between the Fox and the Rabbit we can see a reflection of the
idiotic cunning and guile of the lawyers, who are trying to dupe the peasants, and according to the
story, get the peasants to fuck themselves by saying the wrong thing in court. Máxima isn’t sneaky,
but cunning is certainly a characteristic that peasants value. During those two weeks alone with
Jaime up on the Chaupe’s farm, he told me different versions of the Fox and Rabbit story, with
obvious relish and outbursts of laughter. And funnily enough, when I came back down to Celendín,
Atuq told me the same exact stories. It is clear to me that these stories and the values they exhibit
are cultural, not individual. We can say of campesinos such as Atuq what Hyden says of the East
African peasant: “by using his deceptive skills he has often defeated the authorities”200 Atuq is the
only fox that ever wins. But, again, Máxima isn’t sneaky. Her cleverness resides in her ability to
switch between different registers, the legal and the emotional, between the defense of property
based on legality on the one hand and deep trauma and loss on the other. She can speak their
language when required but she can also cry or, speaking out of turn, morally condemn the pro-
ceedings. She’s able to operate on both of these registers, while the Law, blind to the human ele-
ment, focuses solely on the legality, which they only honor when it suits them. In the waiting room,
between bouts of tears, Máxima would sing a song or crack a joke. She retains her sense of self,
she insists on her way of being. She keeps pushing them, intentionally showing the gaps in the Law: “you say there’s property and that one can be safe and no one will take it away and yet you take it away.” In this way she plays with the logic of the dominators. The cunning of the Chaupe family’s resistance is seen when they continue to plant potatoes or rebuild the extension on their house even after it’s been destroyed numerous times. We might call this ‘civil disobedience,’ and indeed, I heard that phrase come from Atuq’s mouth more than once.

Stories such as the Rabbit and the Fox reveal the value of cunning for peasants, and this mythological battle of wits is reflected in the battle against the mine. Such trickery has old roots in the Andes as *The Huarochiri Manuscript* attests. In the anonymous tale of Cuni Raya Vira Cocha, we’re told of the trickster god who “used to go around posing as a miserably poor and friendless man, with his cloak and tunic all ripped and tattered. Some people who didn’t recognize him for who he was yelled, ‘You poor lousy wretch!’... he went around performing all kinds of wonders, putting some of the local *huacas* to shame with his cleverness…”

But the betrayal of Atahualpa at the hands of Francisco Pizarro is the ur-trick of Peruvian history. Nobody in Cajamarca can forget as it is carved into their hearts. This is why the Guardians of the Lagoons say, “*Manan kanchu!* No more dialogue! They will not trick us like they tricked Atahualpa! History will not repeat itself!”

**AN IRRECONCILABLE DIVORCE**

“Before the mine arrived Cajamarca was a small *pueblo* where families and friends were very close no? It was like that until the first years of the mine…” We were seated in Mirtha’s office and she was shocking me with stories about the young lawyer for Yanacocha, “so coincidently it happens that the lawyer of the mine was my friend, *bueno*, personal friend of my brother and
moreover he was very close to my family. I saw him grow up in my house jajajajajaja with my brother and in fact I believe that they maintain much friendship even now and I do not want to interfere in that because it’s part of the luck of bonds that exist between family and very close friends no?” Mirtha told me that when she did her masters in Spain she had to go for a few months to finish the degree there. She was working in Grufides at the time, doing various things against the mine. “It was the first years of Grufides against the mine.” Mirtha was searching desperately for a replacement and he was a young lawyer that had just finished university, “and I knew him, not only for the friendly relation that he had with me, with my brother, but also cause he studied at the same university as me. I knew of his academic qualities no? A very good kid, academically.” So although he was young she asked him if he could stay in her place and work the cases no? and he accepted, “and in fact he didn’t do a bad job no? and of course other experiences have happened since but… he didn’t do a bad job, and he was there litigating against the mining company.” In that moment, Mirtha said, it was exclusively against Yanacocha because there were no other mining companies: “now they’ve all arrived… bueno, they are beginning…”. He was in her place for a few months then Mirtha came back. Ya he withdrew because he had work in the court. She wasn’t sure since when the mining company had ya put their eye on this young, competent kid no? He was working in the court a time and after that the mining company called him to work for them, “and of course, the mining company always opts to contract very competent people, that is, people very well prepared. What’s more, any lawyer, in reality, wishes to be in a company that pays what they pay no? And in fact, what I see is that this kid has succeeded in becoming one of the principle lawyers that the company has, with the youth that he has.”

One time the mine passed them some documents which included the names of the so-called *powers of the mining company*. “It spoke of 5 lawyers that have authorization not only to litigate,
no, they even have the power to negotiate, to reconcile. These papers even include the amounts that each lawyer manages as margins, and they’re very high amounts… because these 5 lawyers have the power, if they so wish and if people come to make a complaint, to say, ‘ya if you want, I’ll fix the issue for you and we fix you like this,’… what I saw in these powers is that one of the five lawyers is this kid… so, yeah it’s a little anecdote, as we say, we don’t center the case in this no? Nor do we comment much about it because we believe it’s a thing that… it’s between the anecdotal and the… it raises the theme of how the mine acts, operates, no? It has the power, and always has an interest and the ability to enter and mark divisions no? and bueno that is not made very visible… you’re interested because of your line of work no? which is everything anthropological…”

“Of course, but they do the same thing with villages!”

“Exactly, because they do the same thing with villages. That is, Cajamarca, since the moment that the mining company arrived, is here operating, it’s incredible but very close families, how we’ve been dividing and I include myself in that, that is, my family is Cajamarquina and my family is interrelated with many Cajamarquina families and they have split no? as we say, the mine has been a great divide.\textsuperscript{204} Who is with who? And the same thing happened with the friendly relations, that is, I for example, and those that share this topic, we feel it very strongly because friends with whom we have grown up together, now we’ve arrived at a point where they can’t even speak to you, not even that! Life-long friends do not even greet you. Not even a greeting!

Mirtha told me that the kid, this lawyer of the mine, was very nice no? and was a little younger than her and hung out a lot with her brother and at that time she had a very cute dog no? and he really liked dogs so every day he’d come over and ask, “Mirtha let me take your dog for a walk,” no? So she’d say, “ya take it.” Then she exclaimed,

“It was very funny! It’s a very nice anecdote to remember those things no? Bueno… some get bothered if you say, ‘oye he was the guy who walked my dog,’ but no I don’t say it in that sense. It’s a nice anecdote to see how sometimes people who are so close can, after certain occurrences of course, begin to feel that there is an irreconcilable divorce no? that is, how you feel afterward with that friend of
years, even just to talk, when you know that he represents the serious interests of a company… with which you are disputing. You couldn’t sit or talk because even if he still seems very nice but you, what do you do? You have to protect yourself, including you might say something that, at best, he can use in favor of the company.”

**SCENE 6: We’d leave, we’d return, we’d leave, we’d return**

The court is a phantasmal space which carries along its own origin: the colonial wound. Continually repeating, trauma is uncontrolled repetition. History is a traumatized phantasm compulsively repeating. Pathetic, the entire situation is pathetic. But, beyond the nightmarish bureaucracy, the family’s declarations draw attention to the confrontation of different worlds, different notions of decency, of time, of possibility. They must walk 5 hours to get to Sorochuco and 12 hours to Celendín: “foot to foot because as we’re poor we don’t have [enough money] to go in car, we have to walk on foot.” The Public Prosecutor is asking Máxima about their other little house in Sorochuco, as if to prove that the family has in fact not been living up by the Azul Lagoon. She repeats again that the house in Sorochuco is mainly used by her children, to make it easier for them to get to school, “but as I’m saying, yes, my only house, I don’t have other properties more nowhere, we leave to work for weeks like this, but in lands that other people give us to work and sow and harvest half.” Máxima here is hinting at a form of communal work derivative of the traditional forms of *minga, trueque, para rayku* and others which still persist in parts of Cajamarca. Of course this means nothing to the Prosecutor, who only wants to know, “and in these periods who stayed back? Who was there in your land in Tragadero?” Máxima’s responses are priceless, “That’s us *pue*! Who more *pue* going to stay? We’d leave, we’d return, we’d leave, we’d return.”

“You’d return?”

“Clearly, to where else? There was nowhere else to return.”

“You’d return after you would work on another land?”
“We’d return, we’d go a day, two days, a week depending or if not ya my husband would leave, he’d leave at 5, 6 in the morning and I would have to leave with his lunch, his breakfast, there return to prepare the food, to return there, to sleep there.”

**BLATANT DISCRIMINATION**

PROSECUTOR: “According to our criteria, the specific penalty must be completed in conformity with Articles 45 and 46 of our criminal law that indicates individualization should be imposed, and that we should consider situations regarding people and not the reality of the fact, in this case about an incident in a rural area where there is economic and social deprivation, we can admit that the people charged are people who have had poor instruction or education no? We can assume that this also has led them to act without full conception or without properly understanding their criminal acts no? Only with the desire to do good but in an unsuitable way, ya they could have acted differently, which is to say they have not respected the norms as should all respectful citizens…”

He tries to make it sound like he’s doing them a favor by recognizing their inferiority, “…and as you and everybody know it’s a transnational company with the corresponding licenses that has all the right to act inside the national territory, always complies with the laws of the Republic, however they have been prevented from acting or developing their mining economic activity by the participation of the accused who as ya I have shown, resist eviction and refuse to respect the property and the possession of others.” The Chaupes are people of “low economic resources that have certain deficiencies, as ya we have mentioned previously therefore a judgment would not also be possible with an amount that really would correspond [to their crime], because this mining activity as we all know has a very important economic movement however, it’s a question of people, as we have said, whose heritage we consider to not be adequate to impose on them an economic sanction beyond their possibilities.”

When it’s her chance, Mirtha fights back: “Before I finish I must draw attention to an expression that appears to me discriminatory. The Public Ministry has said that the deficient instruction or the education of these persons had led them to commit a criminal act. I believe that these
expressions are outside of all juridical discussion unless with them he wants to consider a type of extenuating factor, which has not been mentioned. To the contrary, we are breaching norms that prohibit the discrimination of people for their social condition. Thank you, señor Judge.”

Figure 4.2

RACISM IN PERU

In a revolutionary newspaper named Lucha Indígena (N92 Abril 2014), the director of which is Hugo Blanco, there is an article critical of the television program ‘Paisana Jacinta’ which presents a “racist stereotype of the Andean population.” The show revolves around the ‘Peasant Jacinta’, who is the poor, indigenous woman of the title, and the butt of all the jokes. Jacinta is
played by a male comedian in the garb of indigenous women, with blacked-out teeth, black braids and a prosthetic nose. As the article states, “It remains clear that racism in Peru is very present, so much so that it can be freely expressed in a program on public television.” The article denounces “the excess of symbolic violence against our cultures” and notes that the program has generated cases of ‘bullying’ which have come to light. “The decision by channel Frequencia Latina to take the show off the air followed a 15-year campaign by Peruvian indigenous-culture group Chirapaq and a recommendation from the UN’s Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to the Peruvian government that the show be banned. Its return, less than a year later, has brought together indigenous women’s groups from across Latin America and the Caribbean in support of Chirapaq’s fight in the #YoNoSoyJacinta (I am not Jacinta) campaign. ‘A quick profile of La Paisana Jacinta leads us to define her as a dumb person, with intellectual disability, ignorant, violent, dirty, vulgar, sloppy, and clumsy,’ Chirapaq said in a report to the committee last year.”

This is only a tiny example of a much larger problem of cultural oppression (racist, sexist and classist) in Peru. The reason I bring up this television show is that the Lucha Indígena article compares two images: one is an image of Paisana Jacinta, ridiculing the image of the campesina, and the other image is the now famous photograph of Máxima with her fist raised in resistance and dignity, the Azul Lagoon majestic behind her.

Alberto Flores Galindo writes that racism is the “other side of the Andean Utopia.” He calls racism, “that peculiar manner of looking at ‘the other,’” and then quotes Adorno: “Topsy-turviness perpetuates itself: domination is propagated by the dominated.” Galindo paints a startling portrait of racism in Peru, one whose defining quality is its invisibility: “No Peruvian identifies himself as a racist.” However, racial categories condition our social perception. “They are part of the very structure of professional groups, mass-media messages, and so-called beauty contests, to mention
only a few examples from daily life. Few consider the racist content of a common census category such as ‘illiterate’.” Galindo argues that “one function of history is to bring us face to face with ourselves, to take us back to the formation of concepts and values we later wished to hide.” In that sense, the psychoanalyst and the historian play similar roles, both work to dissolve the repressive blockages of history and thereby uncover other possibilities, other truths, other myths. Racism may be “veiled or denied” but it is still the guiding force behind institutional power, as we’ve witnessed in the Chaupe case and in the resistance of the Guardians of the Lagoons against the Conga mega-project more generally. (131-132)

It is this polarized, blinded relation which we see in the case of the Chaupes. The Prosecutor, the Judge, and Yanacocha all blame the family for crimes which Yanacocha themselves committed. Their hearts are like broken mirrors where everything appears backwards, inverted, negated, reversed. They are unable to see the Chaupes as people, and unable to see themselves as well.

Jorge Basadre wrote regarding the wars of independence, “the republic deepened the abyss between the Peru defined by laws and the real Peru” (Galindo, 141) which is still very much true today. This double Peru or split Peru is the condition of modernity itself and exists as an identity crisis in which we are all implicated. We are unknown to ourselves, we men of knowledge, we are strangers to ourselves.

“At the beginning of the twentieth century, upper-class intellectuals believed the question of Peruvian identity was settled; the answer lay in the past. There was a national soul, but defining it privileged unity over diversity. One country, one nation, one state. The past conditioned the future. Although different cultural traditions existed in Peru, synthesis held the keys to the future and moved a discourse about mestizaje to center stage. These ideas were best incarnated in individuals. José de la Riva Agüero, author of this historical paradigm, initiated contemporary studies about Inca Garcilaso (1915). Raúl Porras (1936) and others viewed conquistador Francisco Pizarro as the ‘founder’ of the country. By then, mestizaje identified itself with Hispanic tradition, perhaps as a consequence of indigenismo, its
rival current. What emerged amid bitter debate was a dual Peru, but one in which ‘indigenous’ was an abstraction. The idea of national unity was displaced from the past to a hypothetical future. It is still in the making today. Uniting the Spanish and the Indian was proposed as the path toward collective identity.” (Galindo, 245)

For centuries Peru has been plagued by anxiety over its national identity, aftershocks of conquest which took the form of homogenization rather than diversity. Andean peasants were excluded from the dominant image of Modernity though other worlds were always boiling to the surface. Galindo details how, time after time, rebellions were inspired by and took the names of Inca and Andean deities. Yet still in 1962, “writer Luis Loayza lamented that Peruvians lacked a ‘national type,’ an easily identifiable figure such as the Argentine gaucho or the Chilean roto (poor city-dweller).” For Galindo, this misses the point: “The real challenge was finding not one but several national types. Identity did not demand a single response. Plurality lay at the heart of the Andean utopia.” But since the Andean utopia is frequently associated with peasant history, its future appears “precarious in a society in which the countryside and peasants are increasingly less important.” As examples, he sites the dwindling rural population, growing rural poverty, the increase in uncultivated fields, the shrinking number of Quechua speakers, decline in the use of traditional food, fabric and tiled roofs replaced by pastas, synthetic fabrics, and aluminum. Antibiotics force epidemics to retreat but they “relegate traditional medicine to the folkloric.” Capitalist development “uproots and dismantles peasant societies… Modernity and progress come at the expense of the traditional world.” (246) In the face of a disappearing peasantry, structural racism, and indoctrination by neoliberal ideology [Peru: Progress for all], Galindo asks, “in the twentieth century, how relevant is the utopian horizon?” (245) His eyes are towards the future, where Máxima and her family, along with the Guardians of the Lagoons, appear as the latest incarnations of Andean utopia. But we need to adequately understand the magnitude of oppression as the fundamental relation in the Andes (between Whites and Indians, Men and Women, and Rich and Poor),
which is the counter force pushing against the drive to redeem history. Here are a few examples of racism in Peru from the 19th and 20th centuries.

“Lorente’s *Pensamientos sobre el Perú* (Thoughts about Peru) (1855) situated Indians at the margin of civilization and brimmed with disparaging adjectives: ‘They lie in ignorance and are cowards, indolent, incapable of realizing the benefits [of civilization], without feelings, shiftless, thieves, have no respect for the truth, hold no elevated sentiment, vegetate in misery and in worries, and live in drunkenness and sleep in lasciviousness.’ Indians were a repository for all negative values, the mirror image of whites. It is difficult to find an earlier influential writer who served up such openly racist and aggressive discourse against Indians- and this from a forward-thinking, radical figure for the period. In Lorente’s view Indians had degenerated to animal level: ‘Someone once said: Indians are llamas that speak.’ Although a certain prudence led him to attribute the reference to others, he did not clarify or deny it. Yet Indians were not just any llama but rather a ‘stupid llama.’” (Galindo, 144)

“In 1894 Javier Prado y Ugarteche insisted on the ‘pernicious influence that inferior races have exercised in Peru.’ Francisco García Calderón envied countries such as Chile and Argentina that were free of ‘depleted races.’ In 1897 Clemente Palma spoke for many Peruvian intellectuals when he affirmed that ‘the Indian race is an old and degenerate branch of the ethnic trunk from which all inferior races emerge. They have all the characteristics of decrepitude and ineptitude for civilized life. Lacking character, endowed with a mental life that is almost null, apathetic, and without aspirations, they are not adaptable to education.’ In the 1920s, philosopher and university professor Alejandro Deustua stated without qualification that ‘Peru owes its misfortune to the indigenous race.’” (Galindo, 146-147)

**EVIDENCE DENIED**

Mirtha asks the court why, when formulating the accusation, the Prosecutor has not incorporated as evidence the contract of sale, presented by the Chaupe family and granted by the Señor Esteban Chaupe Rodríguez who was the former owner. It was not incorporated and there is no reference to the exclusion of this evidence. They have also failed to incorporate as evidence the certificates of possession granted by the peasant community of Sorochuco to the former owner and the document of transfer of domain and possession in favor of Jaime Chaupe Lozano y Máxima Acuña Atalaya, dated January 16, 1994. “This is a fact that to us appears irregular, and which in
the second instance was observed and recommended that the Public Ministry incorporate it under the principle of procedural legality.”

Another piece of evidence denied entry into the trial was the medical certificates of Máxima and her daughter Jhilda. In order to accuse someone of the crime of ‘aggravated usurpation’ you must prove perturbation of the property with violence or threat. These certificates are proof of violence committed on the part of the police and thus are pertinent to disproving the charges against the Chaupe family: “The medical certificates show that Máxima suffered lesions, had six days of disability and that her youngest daughter Jhilda Chaupe Acuña was also wounded in this attempt at illegal eviction on the part of the mining company. This is credited in the certificate N 00780 that inexplicably the Public Ministry has not incorporated as evidence when formulating the accusation.” And there are no medical records for the police who were allegedly injured by the Chaupe family with “stones, sticks and sharp pointed weapons (machetes).” Mirtha highlights the absurdity of the situation:

“The Public Ministry has dedicated itself to showing that the Chaupes have entered with violence and or threat to the property in dispute, however he has not proved this and it is physically impossible that a family composed of two adults, two adolescents and children violate the custody of the property of a company that, as they have shown, is a transnational company which has private security and the assistance of the National Police, ¿How do you explain that the family violated this security, threatened this security and acted with violence against all this public and private force that the company has?”

**SCENE 7: I did not know justice**

PROSECUTOR: “Ya señora you’ve commented that you do not have economic support for your children. Before you had your problems with the mining company, how would you support your children?”

MÁXIMA: “I would work normal doing a good to the neighbor, whatever thing I would put myself to do. I would leave to do whatever thing without any problem, without any worry but now ya I can not señor…”
PROSECUTOR: “Señora calm yourself. Tell me, in the moment in which the police personnel or the security personnel intervened, in this moment, what attitude did you take? That is, how did you react?”

Her voice trembling with pathos, “As I did not know justice and the Prosecutor, they archived our complaint and my case doesn’t come out, as I mainly didn’t know, I kneeled down asking God…” The sensuous qualities of her voice begin to overpower the meaning of her words. The Prosecutor, “Ya hold it there, señora calm yourself please.” Her words become inaudible but her voice continues in a painful, incomprehensible murmur.

JUDGE: “We are going to suspend this interrogation a moment until the señora calms herself in order that she can present without any problem for the audio. Calm yourself a little moment señora, drink water.”

MÁXIMA: “Ya.”

JUDGE: “Señor Prosecutor, another question?”

PROSECUTOR: “Yes thank you, Señora Acuña ya you’ve calmed no?” So that we can begin another round of evisceration.

“Yes,” She squeaks.

PROSECUTOR: “I hope that you calm yourself because we must clarify the facts no? This is the idea also of everybody that is present. There is no need that you get so excited.”

There is a slight quiver to his voice, almost a laugh, when he says the word ‘emocione’ [excited]. That little laugh betrays how, on a deeper level, even he is embarrassed to utter such impertinence. They mock the excessiveness of her emotional outpouring, covering up their own shame before such an unbridled expression of feeling.

MÁXIMA: “No no really, as I said the last time, sometimes one can not bear it.”

The Judge comes in like a judgment from God, “Señora we want you calm in order to understand you, also you are a little obfuscated, tearful. We can not capture very well what you mean to say ya. Good, Señor Prosecutor.”

PROSECUTOR: “Señora Acuña you were relating the truth of the facts.”

MÁXIMA: “Yes.”
PROSECUTOR: “And with this same feeling you have made allusion to God and even the Truth. Can you relate for us, what was your reaction before the police when they came to your land? Because there are six police wounded, could you perhaps say something in this respect?”

MÁXIMA: “I don’t know what they thought, what they wanted to do no? because for example, they say that they did not present themselves violently but if they did not present themselves violently ¿why they’d go armed with revolvers? with rifles? with machine guns? like this no? Why’d they go, no? Even still, a policeman said that we defend ourselves with a stick and us, what did we have in that moment? We had nothing because really, you should go out to investigate, it’s a jalca, there’s pure grass, straw, there isn’t anything with which to defend ourselves. But they came well armed. Straightaway they attacked us, and why didn’t they come at the hour that he said, to do the exam that pertains to the Public Ministry? They came after 8 days or 15 days. That’s what they did. Our hands are clean. We didn’t have anything to defend ourselves with and we could not…”

Her language breaks up. The words begin to run together. The sense of her voice begins to overtake the sense of her words.

RETURN TO LAUGHTER

Bellowing street sounds echo off the concrete walls throughout the open center of the building. Bare, nude cement steps spiral upward. At the top it opens to the Blue Sky of Eden in all directions. A thin corrugated iron roof, and the wires from the unfinished infrastructure sticking out from the cement frame, gleaming lines of light, scraggly metal hairs…

Máxima is sobbing, distraught, “…look at how they’ve left my family, my husband, my children, they’ve left them with this daño ya… now, for example, my children all suffer in the head, they never suffered before, not one illness, not one pain but now they can not study…” She is seated in the lobby of the court, accompanied by Atuq, Micha, Yovana and myself. She’s waiting for her turn to testify. We hear Jaime’s voice inside the courtroom—strained, stressed. I can’t make out his muffled, indistinct words through the door, but the strained tone comes through clear
as day. Máxima tells us that she’s worried about Jaime “cause he was hit in the head and it left him traumatized. When he gets worked up— can’t remember.”

A spy for Yanacocha is sitting on the bench with us. Dark glasses and a blank look on his face. Does him some good to see Máxima crying, I think, his leg shaking, tapping his foot nervously, wakes his conscience to see what type of people he’s spying on. It was probably Lynda that had pointed him out. I have here noted in my journal that she said, “He’s like a big fucking obvious person.” I tell Atuq with my eyes that the guy sitting next to him is a miner. He’s taking pictures of us with his cell… I sneak pictures of him too. I also take pictures of Sr. Fiscal Rupert Eugenio Alcantara Vasquez as he’s walking down the street, the corrupt public attorney that is prosecuting both the Chaupe family and Atuq. As Atuq later told me, “he’s boss of all the fiscales. High rank. In Cajamarca he has tierra como mierda [a shit load of land], and all his children work in Yanacocha.” Atuq had a special phrase for this image combat: “Psychological war”.

CRACK! BOOOOOOOOOOM!

I try to calm her, give her heart, “You’re all so strong… you’ve fought until this point and you can keep going!” No answer from Máxima except sniffles. I sigh, then continue, “You’ve done something incredible! Many people could not do what you have done, and the world will see!”

“Mmmmmmmmmmm,” deep rumbling sign of agreement comes from Atuq. Slow and profound sound from the base of his throat.

Explosions tear through the Blue Sky of Eden, blowing holes in our sensoriums. In broad daylight, these fireworks have no colors, just a wincing loud dumb blow of sound, a flash and a puff of smoke. ¡It’s Corpus Cristi! The same rockets that the people fired at the police when the Martyrs of Water were killed. As Máxima cries the secretaries cackle amongst themselves… they’re oblivious.
MÁXIMA: “And that is what I say, look compañero… I’ll carry on, in the good times and the bad times, although hungry I will continue… If they kill me on my land then they kill me, if they kill me on the path then they kill me, if they send me to jail, they send me but I am not going to humiliate myself nor will I shut myself up. All that was done to me, what I’ve suffered, everything that my family’s been through… the only one that is going to accompany me and sees all of my problems will be my Señor that is in the sky…

LIC LIC: “Máxima, please try and calm down because they will not let you declare if you are crying…”

ATUQ: “Yes pue, calm compañera.”

MÁXIMA: “Ay but, but I can’t bear this horrible feeling, I just can’t bear it. Only my God confirms me, because of him I know that bread today will last me three or four days, or if it’s a glass of water, I take either. All the while they are going to breakfast, they are going to lunch, while no nothing gets done but they are not going to take advantage of me. That’s why people here say, the ambitious man wants money, wants silver, he’s not interested in the life of a person but he’s interested in money, the greed, in the same way the authorities, the money, they never will make justice. Man is in the earth, in the craving, the anxiety, in the sin, but while He up above is all seeing… only with that do I confirm myself.”

ATUQ: “And there are shit people that lend themselves di? to the favor of these transnationals, informers, those implicated. The police that should be protecting our territory are the bodyguards, the guachimanes of the transnationals.”

MÁXIMA: “Ahhh… now for example the police receive salaries because as it’s said the police are paid by the state and who is the state? We are. A part of us. Rather than care for us they go against us, they receive money from companies to come and kill us, to hit us.”

ATUQ: “They are guachimanes of the transnationals.”

MÁXIMA: “Yes…”

ATUQ: “We defend the Mother Earth! And they will not beat us, they will not beat us these sinvergüenzas [scoundrels]… I need to call Shoquito… you have credit?”

LIC LIC: “My phone is almost dead…”

ATUQ: “Don’t say that! Ya it’s dead… his cell phone…”

MÁXIMA: “Ba.”

ATUQ: “¡Don’t say that! Tell him, su gafo [you idiot]!! Don’t say that it’s dead!”

MÁXIMA: “You have to say it’s alive!”

ATUQ: “Even if it’s sick but not that it’s dead!”

MÁXIMA: “Even if it’s fainting, but you have to say it’s alive pue, robust…”

ATUQ: “But you throw voices that ya it’s dead.”

MÁXIMA: “Ya pue.”

ATUQ: “And a man if ya it’s dead is ya not worth fo’ nothing ya”

MÁXIMA: “Pucha ya… he fucking it all… jajajaja”

ATUQ: “Better that death ya comes … jajajaja”

MÁXIMA: “Yes better that ya at once ya he goes to the tomb… jajajaja”
ATUQ: “Su gafó, dile…” [You idiot, tell him.]
MÁXIMA: “As he himself says, gringo gafó!”
LIC LIC: “I am like a child, I am a gringo gafó, gringo huevon [white idiot].”
ATUQ: “They call him ‘open cage’…”
MÁXIMA: “Why?”
ATUQ: “If his bird hasn’t flown ya it’s dead… jajajajajajaj”
LIC LIC: “I didn’t understand that… jajajajajajaj”
MÁXIMA: “I yes, I yes I understood it.”
LIC LIC: “Idiot falcon!! Why? Because he doesn’t eat dove, he eats bird… jajajajajajaj”
MÁXIMA: “Compañeros as this word says: idiot falcon… ya!! And what’s the rest? Cause he doesn’t eat dove in order to eat bird. It’s like what happens to the police, ya no, they don’t eat the dove of their woman to eat the bird of the engineers… jajajajajajajij”
ATUQ: “Good, good, jajajajajajajaj and the dove of his woman I eat it carajo!”
MÁXIMA: “The dove is abandoned pue… clearly pue, yes it’s abandoned and them, who are they following after? the bird…”
ATUQ: “…of the miners!”

Everybody laughs. Even the spy is smiling. Atuq suddenly turns and offers him the bag of coca.“¿Coquita?” The spy snaps to, blinks and says, “No thank you.”

MÁXIMA: “What a joke!”
ATUQ: “Circus stake”
MÁXIMA: “Ya.”
ATUQ: “Circus stake…they nail you wherever… jajajajajajajaj”
MÁXIMA: “Pucha!”
(Everyone laughs again)
LIC LIC: “Drunk Hen. Why? Because you’ll sit on any egg Jajajajajaj”
ATUQ: “Yankee Flag. Because they nail you even on the Moon… jajajajaj”
MÁXIMA: “At any hour, in the day, in the night, on the Moon, in the darkness. Jajajaj”

The laughter dies down and Yovana asks, “You have credit?”
ATUQ: “I have none…”
MÁXIMA: “We are very misios [poor, without money] all of us that are here.”
LIC LIC: “A mishu, four mishus psychological war… there are two options, we cry or we laugh…”
MÁXIMA: “Ah, that!”
MICHA: “We have to laugh!”
ATUQ: “Because the miners want to see us crying.”

MÁXIMA: “But look compañero also yes, there are moments that we have to cry, but later I can laugh, I can dance, I can sing, but in it all I have to give something to my body.”

ATUQ: “I tell you, they say that the husband of a señora died, he died, and they go to bury him, and she wasn’t crying, wasn’t crying, but their relatives they yes they were crying and the wife wasn’t crying, but after the burial she goes, and takes off her calzoncito [little panties] and she urinates on the tomb… and from there they come close and they ask her, ‘you haven’t cried but you go and urinate on the tomb’ no? ‘Each one cries from where they most miss’ is what she said.”

MÁXIMA: “That is, she didn’t miss him from the belt up but from the belt down… jajajajajaja… cried horribly because the tears seized her… Jajajajajaja.”

ATUQ: “I tell you another, ya they say that there once was a señor that had his wife but the guy had a tremendous… pucha214 and he grabbed215 his wife for all the holes… even the ass and each time that he grabbed her ass it made the señora cry, pucha lo sacaba su mierda [he fucked the shit out of her], makes her cry and in the middle of it he dies but he dies with his piece up ya? and they couldn’t close the coffin… they call to his wife and they say, ‘What do we do?’ pue no? and she says, ‘We’ll have to cut it off…’

‘But where do we put it?’

‘We’ll have to put it in his ass’, and they cut it, they turn him over and they give it to the deceased, pucta and the muertito [little dead one] once they give it he begins to cry and she says to him, ‘Ya you see carajo when I told you that it hurts and you didn’t believe me, there, now it’s your turn, bear it dammit… here no more one pays for everything, in this world.’

MÁXIMA: “Yes that’s why we say, ‘some day they will pay.’ But it’s not this way. God says, ‘leave it, they are with me.’ They don’t even realize what they are going to pay. Here no more one pays, clearly and so they must take account and this that was dead will be alive…”

LIC LIC: “All your songs, jokes, and stories are incredible! They’re all forms of folk art… we don’t have much of this in the U.S.A. anymore. It’s not very strong like here.”

MÁXIMA: “Therefore I’m going to go to the U.S.A., jajajajaja I’m going to go, I’m going to sing, I’m going to cry, I’m going to dance, I’m going to give my testimony of what I live, what I suffer… jajajajajajaja.”

YOVANA: “When will you declare?”

MÁXIMA: “It is not yet known because they’re still taking Jaime’s declara- tion… we wait… we wait until the ultimate consequences… I have no fear of it, nor of death, nor of jail. Where am I going to pass? and the counsel that I have is…”

YOVANA: “You’ve lost your freedom but not your rights!”
MÁXIMA: “…and in jail they will ask me, ‘Why are you here?’ Bueno, if I have killed, then I did a crime… if not…”

YOVANA: “Can you lend me your telephone to make a llamadita [little call].”

MICHA: “¡Ask the miner!”

There is a short burst of laughter and then we’re all silent. Yovana asks the man in dark glasses if he has any credit. He shakes his head no. I realize my phone has turned back on and I lend it to her so she can call her mom to ask her to pick up Alexander, Yovana’s son. Micha says, “Send her a message.”

YOVANA: “But my mom can’t read.”

LIC LIC: “I thought I had no battery, but right now there is battery.”

MÁXIMA: “Aya it charges, say, the battery because…”

LIC LIC: “With these jokes it’s living again! What was dead has risen again!”

MÁXIMA: “Ay ay, I tell you, a señora, it’s said she had all her husband, her children… the señor it’s said he had his lands, he sold and later he went. He lived in the low lands and he went to the high lands, he brought216 their papas, their ocas, their ollucos, on their beasts, on their mules and wherever he was, he came singing, whistling as he approached… be it with beasts, be it him alone, even though he’d brought something or no hadn’t brought nothing, ya the señora, she heard the whistle, they say, ya she came out, she heard him sing and came out and the señora when ya she heard it and he approached, she said, ‘ay ya my little husband comes, ay ya he’s there…’ She’d say, ‘ay ya my little husband comes, my papas, yuquillas he brings to me… my ocas, wicapas217 he brings to me,’ They say the señora said like this pue and one day came that the señor died and they only had a little plot of land with his little horse, his house no more ya little horse, house and the bit of land they called the Hueco Jondo [Deep Hole]. So the señor died and the señora cried, it’s that she said, ‘he’s finished pue my husband, for those peaks he’d approach…’ but she drew it all out pue in the whistle, the señora… and she would say when he approached singing [Máxima whistles] she’d say, when she dreamed singing, it’s that she would say, ‘Ya I am arriving to see him my amorcito [little love],’ she’d say and she’d cry like this pue because her husband died and later, at the end, it’s that she would say, [Máxima sings] ‘Ayyy si acaboooo puee mi maridoooo… todo todo pue lo acabó, solo el huecooo grande lo dejóooo…’ jajajajajajajajajaja [yes my husband pue is finished… all all pue he finished, he only left behind the big hole…] and the people, they said, ‘the señora, her life is finished for her hole that was left behind…’ when they didn’t understand, the señora said,
‘The Hueco Fondo he left it, my little house’, and they thought that she only said, ‘My big hole he left it…’ Jajajajajajajajaja … it’s a joke…”

The act of simply telling these joke is defiant in and of itself. Laughter in the face of such suffering, this is the dreamweapon in action. The campesinos fight with everything they’ve got, including the culture of folk humor. Atuq drops the bomb and in the process transforms despair into joyous laughter, laughter which gives us the strength to keep fighting.

What is this space of laughter that we find ourselves in? The tone, the atmosphere is so radically different than the gloomy seriousness of the courtroom. Intimacy is the key. Such joking is only possible among close friends. And they’re so insightful! Take Atuq’s first joke for example, where the wife pisses on the grave of her husband. There is a slippage between the normal sign of mourning (tears) and the abnormal sign (urine), but the urine is not just a sign of love but of erotic desire. There is an overflowing of love, in both its ideal and base forms, as an emotional excess becomes a vaginal excess. This is desublimation at its finest: starting from the eyes, the head, and appropriate mourning we then move downward as the tears of eros are unleashed. Or what about Atuq’s second joke, in which the corpse’s phallus is cut off and shoved up his own ass. It’s as if Atuq were saying: “You can’t fuck somebody without getting fucked.” It’s an immanent form of justice. It’s also a critique of patriarchy. And then there’s Máxima’s long rambling joke, in which the homestead is confused with the widow’s vagina. All of these jokes are carnivalesque profanations in which the noblest things, in this case the dead patriarch, are debased. But, as Bakhtin rightly insists, there is always something regenerative about carnivalesque uncrowningings. These debasements are made in the name of the ‘lower bodily stratum’, drawing attention to the base which is ever-present but typically repressed and kept out of sight. In these jokes the base bursts out, erupts, and reveals eroticism as the hidden truth of love and death.
In his essay “Some Collective Expressions of Obscenity In Africa”, Evans Pritchard asks why obscene songs are not only permitted but indeed are recommended for mourners? He states the explanations of Smith and Dale: in abnormal times, abnormal things are done to restore the normal conditions of affairs. Pritchard finds this explanation “a little mystical,” and furthermore, he doesn’t think things like launching a canoe, sowing and fishing are abnormal. But I believe they are abnormal in the sense that they stand out from the quotidian as moments fraught with danger.

What if we cut off the last part of the explanation, the part that identifies the function of transgression and obscenity as: “to restore the normal conditions of affairs”? Then we are just left with, “in abnormal times, abnormal things are done,” which seems to ring true and is refreshingly open ended. It is not constricted by the need for an air-tight explanation and it drops the assumption that transgressions are merely made in order to reestablish the status quo. Pritchard seems to agree. After offering his own long-winded and hard-to-follow explanation, in which he argues that taboo and transgression ultimately reinforce one and other in typical functionalist manner, Pritchard then writes these sentences, which some call the ‘safety valve’ theory of culture:

“collective obscenities generally occur as part of large ceremonial undertakings such as those associated with death, the birth of twins, drought and initiation into manhood. Now these are all occasions of emotional stress fraught with grave danger… the pent up emotions of anger, fear, sorrow, grief reaches a point where some activity is essential: yet, unless this activity is guided into harmless channels it may prove to be fatal to the individual and disruptive to society. On such occasions society condones, or even prescribes, actions which it ordinarily prohibits and penalizes.” (326)

We must never lose sight of the fact that there is something fun, exciting, and emotionally satisfying about the expression of obscenities. But there is also the sense of grave danger. Could the ‘pent up emotions’ of history be weaponized and blasted at the ruling class by means of some dreamweapon?
I should point out that the Spanish word base was commonly used in Cajamarca to refer to the mass of folk, scattered throughout the mountains in their small villages and local organizations. The campesinos always emphasized that the decisions of the lucha came from los bases, in large general assemblies, and not from the top down. They were often accused of being manipulated by politiqueros who only care about the lucha in order to further their own selfish ends. It was a point of pride for the people to insist that the resistance was by and for the people themselves. So, in this light, the eruption of the base has multiple revolutionary meanings: simultaneously the eruption of the folk, the lower bodily stratum, and ultimately of the Pacha Mama herself in the struggle to defend the planet.

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Finally, it’s done. The trial is finished for today. Jaime comes out looking dazed and battered. Milton follows behind solemnly. I overhear Milton say to Atuq: “Cold, cold, they remained cold. His face has no blood.” He’s talking about the Prosecutor, the Lawyer for Yanacocha and the Judge, “I didn’t watch Jaime, but I watched their faces in order to see what say these disgracefuls.” Atuq y Micha y Máxima thought it wise to sweep up the coca fragments. I got the broom, so the fiscalía can’t say we’re dirty messy burros sin cultura… campesinos [donkeys without culture… peasants].
5. A CHOLO RONDERO AND HIS PAPAS
We walked from Santa Rosa to El Lirio in the hopes of finding Daniel Gil. It was an overcast day, the green of the grass stood out, glowing. Otherwise the curving, sloping land was sparse. Some shrubs, scattered stones, a few clumps of quiñao trees. Now and then we passed a neighbor’s house. My pockets were filled with stones in case of dog attack. Flares of barking announced our uncertain progress along the road. After an hour, we turned onto a path that appeared to be sunken into the earth. Was it made by someone or was it natural? We came to a fork and after admitting to ourselves that we were lost, we decided on the right hand path. Where were we going? In search of a hidden place. Would Daniel be there? Coming around a bend we met two women carrying sacks of potatoes, “Oh Daniel, he’s just over there.” We went back the way we came and then turned down the left hand fork. Strange rock formations peopled the way. A lush carpet of intensely green grass spread out on either side followed the irregular contours of the hills. Coming over a ridge we began our descent. The path narrowed as we passed sink holes on either side. Low lying clouds rolled over us ethereally, luminous spirits making their rounds as the landscape appeared and disappeared, adding a heightened sense of mystery to our journey, heaven coming down to earth. Then Daniel’s home finally came into view: a large adobe house with smoke coiling out of the top. Saddles, cloths, alforjas, and ponchos hung on a line across the front, syncopated by three wood poles supporting the wide roof of ichu. Underneath were long wooden benches where the family sat: Daniel, his elderly mother, and his brother Jose. Jose’s wife and children played on the grass. Behind the house I caught a glimpse of a stone wall and behind that, an endless field of clouds stretching out to the horizon.

Daniel’s mother said, “The people here are ashamed to invite others to eat, for example they’re eating chococha, achichin to give’em a plate. But not us, we invite you, yes, eat, eat, or what?”
They brought out a pot of boiled *papas* with green *huacatay* sauce, *quesillo*, *cancha*, and a tea of *berenjena*. Daniel told us about a disagreement with some health workers: “They want us to plant beets, plant carrots but why not grow the native cabbages, turnip? For example, there’s a grass, a wild *huacatay* that they call here *chiche burro*, and another is the *mosgoy* plant that is medicinal for the kidney. But they make you buy beets, they give [seeds] and *ya no* they don’t have for example articho… this chard, here there are so many *yerba*! I’m not trying to complain but rather to complement. We had a meeting Monday up there in Jadibamba and I told them that we have to be the premier exporters! However we haven’t been able to apply this politic and confront the central government with its politic not of premier exporters but rather of premier consumers, *ya* we’re becoming the rice people, *ya no* they don’t want to eat anything else, that’s why there is malnutrition. We shouldn’t have chronic malnutrition here but the *gringos* bring sickness to us and later the scandal that we’re in extreme poverty. It’s what the mining brings *pue*. Before the mining we were in forth place, the mining arrives, today we’re in first place. So there’s the problem of the coast coming through here, the rice of the coast, chicken, spaghetti… we’re invaded by junk food! The other problem on the coast is that the rice *ya* is *trangénico*. They also want to do it here with the *papas*, and today *ya no*, in the past the *campesino* still saved his little rice fo’ seed! Now *ya no*, that rice *ya no* it don’t produce if they save it. They have to buy from the companies, there’s the business. It’s terrible, for example, *ya no* I don’t have faith in soy either. We discussed this one day with an adventist vegetarian. I told him, ‘not only should you believe in *diosito*, but you also have to see the satanic man. We have to say it everywhere we go, the satanic man is degenerating what God built.’”

The sounds of spoons scraping plates, the sounds of chewing mouths. Speaking with food in one’s mouth. Daniel has a strange voice, like a gnome or *duende*. His mother is difficult for me
to understand. One of her eyes is swollen shut, half her face sags from a stroke. Jose’s wife cleans her face with *mala yerba*, medicine for the fever.

“*Mala yerba* [bad herb] is medicine?” I ask.

“Yes, all plants are medicine. The *mala yerba*, *cerraja*, the *flor blanca*, the *llanten* are all medicine.”

We ask Daniel about his life. “I’ll sing you a *yaravi* about where my parents came from and *bueno* they settled here, and I’m still here no? I like this song because my mama was marginalized by her family for marrying my papá who was a miner.” He paused for a moment, then he said, “I always like to inspire myself like my papá, no? The song says…

My mother was a *campesina*,
My father was a miner,
The union of this affection
 gave birth to this *cholo rondero*.224

His eyes glimmered with tears. None of us expected it. From there he continued narrating:

“My papá was a miner in Hualgayoc, my mamá was a *campesina*, from Quilcate, San Miguel. The grandfather on my mamá’s side was an administrator of a *hacienda*, like a *huataco*225 as they say in Quechua. So, as they had money, they didn’t look kindly on my papá for being poor and so my parents emigrated to the zone of Huasmin and there they raised us. My papá went to grow *papas*. We saw the abuse of the *hacendados*, the chores, the demands to work, and my father, my *abuelita* on my father’s side, taught us to study and to read and so we knew about class difference. The *hacendado*, for example, made his bread with butter but for the people he made it only with flour soaked in water and toasted in a *tiesto*.226*

Daniel’s mother spoke up, “I was piling up the *papas* and the *señora* put butter on all the tables, ‘Oye Carmelita,’ the *hacendado* said to her, ‘don’t put butter for the peons, they only get salt,’ ‘What?’ she asked, ‘*Ay* dirty negro, pardon me! This negro! Look how he maintains his
people. The stomach of the poor, of the rich, whoever’s it is, is equal, receives equally. Let’s see, I’ll give you bread with only salt, let’s see, when you’re hungry your stomach will receive it,’ This hacendado had been an arch tyrant with his people. Whatever he said we’d have to do. I’ve suffered it, gather corn and pile it up down below, bring the load of corn to the hacienda, and now in our storehouses, and then bring the load to Cajamarca in nothing but a sack slung over my shoulder.”

Daniel, “I’ll tell you the history no? My father was a fighter, but he was also proud, that is, this land that they’d bought, it was first rented. My grandfather had been a renter here first, before my father came, and the hacendado threw him out because he started with the in-home private schools to teach the people, threw him out with a kick. Afterward ya my mamá came with my papá and again my mamá started with that also, the in-home private schools, and he wanted to do the same but my papá ya more prepared, stopped him, and so the hacendado put up with it cause of the threat of agrarian reform. What was the strategy of the hacendado? that is ya not to marginalize but rather to keep my papá as someone important and bueno they began the reform but my papá separated from them because they were opportunists. You’ve seen the Prado family. They only used the reform in order to negotiate the lands and now they’re first-class miners. So when a señor here in the Number 8 bought his land, the lease that he had, they looked for my papá so that he’d represent him pue, he’d say, ‘how many hectares? how much per hectare?’ and he realized that the hacendado would say, ‘there are so many hectares,’ my papá jumped up, ‘but Patrón…’”

Mother, “‘Child’ they called him…he ruined people…”

Daniel, “But Patrón there aren’t that many hectares here,’ The hacendado would grab him and say, ‘Oye cholo sonso, don’t open the eyes of these people… you’re renting, I will sell to you.”
Mother, “That’s how he treated my husband, ‘don’t open the eyes of the people.’ But my husband would respond, ‘I’m going to say whatever it is pue patrón, I’m not telling lies.’

Daniel, “The people here didn’t know what a hectare was. Look, I’ll tell you how far the ignorance of the pueblo went, because the culture that was here did not use money no? Everything was the mingas, the trueque, the ayllu²²⁷, look, I’ll tell you a true case no? A señor wanted to sell his land to another that lived as a renter and he asked for 500 soles ya, and ‘where pue are we going to find 500 soles uuuuuuhhh,’ and they found the man’s son and said to him, ‘Today Antonito do us a favor, do it pue, see if your papá will sell us the land. We’ll give him five 100s. 500 no, it’d bury us. No?

Everybody, “JAJAJAJAJAJAJA.”

Daniel, “Jajajaja there it is. You have to see the level of ignorance that there was, how far the dominion went. It was very easy to maintain control of the people. And for the other side, the aristocracy. In every hacienda there was a church, there was the system of confession. The priest there and he’d pass everything to the hacendado, so he’d know what was happening, claro pues, I have a book about that. Claro, that’s how it was here. There is a family that they call the 40, because when the priest asked the señor, ‘how many women do you have hijito,’ and as the man was medio sonso he said, ‘40! Apart from my samba de oro and my mother-in-law’, and now they’re called the 40, that is ya everybody in the church heard him, they heard him outside the confessional and now everybody calls this family the 40.

The people here have become accustomed. You have to look at the dominion of the hacienda. They gave a crumb to the pueblo. They’d have a fiesta to entertain them while they exploited them in enthusiastic mingas and then enriched themselves with the product. The people have become accustomed to this and there are still people that make fiestas, you see the people go, even
though they don’t have enough to eat, they go to the *fiesta*, because that’s how the *hacendado* accustomed them, that’s why I tell you, you have to read the difference of classes, just read *Paco Yunque*…. But they don’t want to *pue*, they don’t want to.”

Mother, “Now for the *fiesta* on the 8th of September, he would name one person from the highlands and another from the low lands, to be *mayordomo*. And each one had to bring the *hacendado* an *arroba* of *yuca*, an *arroba* of… a dead rooster and the other a live rooster, and he didn’t want hens, ram’s meat with all the…” [thick mucous cough].

Daniel, “With all the testicles, so that he know that it’s a ram…”

Mother, “As tributes *pues* they’d bring the *hacendado* a pound of butter, 4 kilos of rice, one from each person, he would name two.”

Daniel, “That is, the *mayordomo* had to give food to the *hacendado* and food to the people. He’d give food to the dances. There were dance competitions which they’re losing now. They had to give the *hacendado* a ram, a *cuy* that he’d eat inside with his relatives and close friends. The *hacendado* would give nothing. Nothing, nothing. The priest would bring artificial toys so that they do baptisms and everything.”

Mother, “In the night, at the hour that we would leave church, we had to wait for the *mayordomos*. They’d give to all the people and the *hacendado* got a jug with lime, his *ponche* with lots of egg and they made *chicha* and those that wouldn’t give, ‘get off my land!’ Yes, there was a little house, a little *choza* that we made pretty ya he would charge rent, and if we don’t want, ‘get off’!”

Daniel, “And if we didn’t complete [the chores], ‘get off, clear out!!!’ and he would throw them from his land.”

Mother, “He’d see that we had lots of little pigs. We’d have to give him one. He saw that we were collecting *papas*, *ocas*, *habas*, we’d have to give him some of everything.”
Luna, “And the *hacendado* still has family around here I imagine no?”

Daniel, “Yes, a miner turns out *pue*, called Rosario Rabanal, he’s in the lobbies that the mine makes. The *hacendados* and powerful families of the past continue to be the powerful families of today, the Benavides for example, or the Ganosas, Roque Benavides Ganosa. Ganosas had been owners of the *hacienda* Laredo no? Laredo the producer of sugar no? The Ganosas, the Benavides, they continue in the mining, it’s a new type of *hacendado*. They continue managing and controlling everything. The group Romero for example of the *hacienda* los Aspíllega, I think they have disappeared, it’s in Cayaltí. They were of the *hacienda* of Cayaltí in Lambayeque. They came from Spain and they grabbed land here, with pistols and *claro* to work the people, that’s it, that’s it *ya* the new colonialism. They began to have these *haciendas.*”

Mother, “The *hacendado* *ya* built the school *ya* and the teacher would take the children to pick wheat, pick lentils and I said to the teacher, ‘what *pue* the *magisterio* pays you to pick wheat? Degrain corn? Very nice,’ I said to her, ‘if I had money I’d pay you to bring the children to help me too.’ Doing chores. She wouldn’t teach them to read in school, but rather they were ordered to pick wheat so that the *hacendado* eat. Or make bread, sell.”

Daniel, “My papá for example, in order to have rent, the *hacendado* would make him complete chores, but heavy one. My papá knew how to amortize letters, protest letters all that, *ya* that was his business, that is *ya* he didn’t suffer. Ohhh they’d come on their knees down the path to the *hacendado* and ‘Child,’ they called him but I had a good upbringing thanks to my grandfather. He told us, ‘if you call him Child I’ll give you a smack,’ he’d say and he’d give us a smack, ‘but make sure that you greet him,’ or he’d give us another smack, ‘Good day *señor,*’ and the *hacendado* would say, ‘these *cholos* of Victor Gil…”
Mother, “In order to enter his office we’d go through his porch cleaning our feet, and from there to another door to get to his office, a carpet to clean your feet and ‘Good afternoon niño, good day,’ like that, but I never called him niño.”

As we got ready to take a walk around his property, Daniel told us about a plan he had to make a dairy plant. He had obtained $10,000 from Holland. “In that time one could buy mules to bring everything because there weren’t roads. We had the preparation, they gave us equipment, training, everything pue and what happened? The people rejected me, saying that it was communism, that is to say, Socialism is the enemy. The mine doesn’t give these projects, sustainability, rather it gives facilismo [convenience]. Take your chicken, take your soda, or take money. Let’s go on a trip or take so much that I don’t know what you’ll spend it on. Therefore, one always spends. One does what’s easiest, the facilismo, and if one goes to the facilismo the poverty begins to spread more and more in a country no?”

Daniel lamented the loss of culture. “A muchacho had been in the mine and I said to him, ‘oye, teach your cousin to weave,’ and he insulted me. Ya they don’t even spin ya. My sister in law is into weaving but she’s not creative with the art, dyeing with natural colors, because the foreigners are not going to buy plastic wool. If it’s dyed with plants, I know pue, I’ve got that no? That is, I don’t contradict those who are fond of weaving but they import the material from god knows where. From there, from the Green-Goes229. The important thing would be to obtain vegetables or things around here that dye. The wool from here, everything from here. I’ve explained this to them various times, but they don’t understand. For example, the fiesta of Jerez was in September and since the mayor is a miner, well, there’s no dialogue with him, but his representative suggested that there be a contest of folk music, bandas típicas, and we agreed. That it not be plastic but rather natural pue no? because in Jerez there is a very beautiful wealth, for example, they make little
trumpets with leaves of chirimoya or orange… and they’re losing it. It’s important that they don’t lose the traditions no? It’s important because this beats the miners. But people are not united. Behind one alienating current comes another, for example they’ve criticized me a lot, ya in Cutervo they say we have money. They say, ‘wool pants and wool jacket,’ no? that’s because ya they’ve realized that the asistencialismo, the facilismo is cheap pue, a poncho, a jacket but my jacket is made of wool. This is ram’s wool.

It’s a good thing that my papá never gave us money. When I was younger there were the uniforms, beige with a soldier’s visor, and they demanded that we wear them ya from the second year onward, especially for fiestas patrias [national holidays], ‘Papá my uniform,’ I didn’t say papá to my papá, rather I called him Victor, ‘Victor, my uniform,’ ‘Where am I going to get money from? I don’t have. This Saturday and Sunday look for Rogelio,’ he was a guy that would help me, ‘gather the habas and next Saturday bring them to Bambamarca. They’ll buy.’ So I sold habas to buy my uniform! I had to bring a lot of salt and kerosene, and sometimes matches, that was the obligation, and the rest ya sugar, rice, pasta, that ya only if it fit. And I learned how to manage my money. My papá never gave me money. I remember my brother one time wanted to go to the fiesta over here in Sorochuco, ya! ‘Get going! go to Quillacate,’ which is over there in the land of my mama, over there, he had to bring the papas to Cajamarca in a milk truck and carry his sacks to the fiesta pue, if he wanted to have money pue.”

As we walked, Daniel pointed out the different plants: “That’s native oregano. Great for the menstrual colics when it’s cold out. A few little leaves is really good, and it’s natural and commonly found, and we know that we’ll never get rid of that illness, jaja. I got a hull-less barley from Huánuco but the birds finished it off. I have this chochoca negra, they make a drink from this, you see? I got a bromatological analysis of the native products from here, for example look,
this is the *tomate de árbol* which is the *berenjena*, the *oca*, the *tarwi*, there is the *mashua*, for those that want to stay young. Yes, yes, the value of the *mashua*! I had an exposition in *la Molina*, but the government saw it as dangerous, went no further *ya*. They don’t support those things *pues*. They try to isolate. This is from Puno, the *quinua* no? They plant it here also but in less proportion. This is the *cañihua*, there is none of that here. The *cañihua is buenazo* also no? The sweet potato, for example, this is from Lima.”

Daniel also told us about how the names of places had changed over time: “They say that the *hacienda* here was of one such Manuel Orbegoso Jerez. He was from Spain. I don’t know if he was from Jerez, because in Spain also there’s a Jerez, but they called the first *hacendado* Manuel Orbegoso Jerez, and from there they began. Before it was called El Lirio it was Numero 8, and before that it had a name in Quechua. *Claro*, Chilac *pue*. Chilac of the water, of the waterfall *pue*. Numero 8 *ya* comes from when the *hacienda* had corrals that were made of earth, this was number 8 and from there comes Chilac Numero 8, Chilac Vista Alegre over there. People erased *chilac* because they said it’s an ugly name. Now they only put Vista Alegre… it’s another type of alienation *pue*. José Gálvez put the name José Gálvez, when in reality it was Huacopampa. And here El Lirio was called el Rejo. The majority put a very ugly name. It’s Quechua I think, it’s a corral, where another corral of the *hacienda* had been, up over there, a natural corral, el Rejo, but when we voted I said they should call it El Lirio because in a little place, high up in the swamps, there were *lirios* growing no? Celendín comes from Chilindrin! *Bueno*, according to the history more than anything, they say that there had been a lagoon there, and you can see it, because they’ve recently found dinosaurs there. Chilindrin, but *ya* when the Spanish came *ya* they formed the *hacienda*, a Spanish woman, *la Villa Amalia de Chilindrin*, and from there well, the Quechua *ya* and
in the end Chilindrín became Celendín, that’s how it was. There are many places in Peru that end in bamba no? Bamba is pampa pue, Jadi is man, so Jadibamba is ‘man of the pampa’.

My niece asked about a place called Chilinconga. She couldn’t get any help from my brother-in-law, who’s an engineer, or my sister, who’s a nurse. ‘Papi they gave me this homework in school, what does Chilinconga mean?’ ‘Get out! These are cojudeses,’ my brother-in-law said no? My sister also paid her no attention. ‘Uncle, maybe you, what does Chili mean?’ I understood that the professor wanted to rescue the cultures, that’s why she had given this homework to the students no? ‘Bueno, what I know,’ I told her, ‘chiri in Quechua is cold and conga is hill or mountain as they say. Conga, that’s the goal, the peak, so … I put it like that pues, and a good question! ‘Puccha’ she said, ‘Papá bruto, my uncle from the country has given me the answer,’ she said.”

Daniel was a rare combination of peasant and intellectual. He was honored with the title of ‘permanent advisor’ in the rondas campesinas due to his long experience in various social movements. “I’m 57 years old ya. I’ve been in the social fight since I was 18 years old, of course apart from that, the ronda here. At that time there was no ronda, but I went in ’73, yes, in ’75, ’76 we started it here. I knew Daniel Idrogo, long before. It was him that had the organic vision of the rondas. At this time there had been the current in the university, he was one of the pucamoros that now are Sendero… and I was a puquillacta230, but revising dialectics pues we arrive at the conclusion that it was an aborted revolution no? jajajajaja.”

Daniel had been a dirigente231 of the rondas during two periods, in 1987 and from 1994 to 1997. “The ronda formed because, in this time, thieves would take your fiambre232 or steal your mules during a trip. They’d assault us in the night and take our things. So in Cuyumalca they robbed a school and that started the initiative, ya not only guardians but something more, community justice, caring for ourselves and ‘ronda’ comes from there, making ‘rounds’, bueno, we began
with good results, this current was clandestine until ’85. It was dangerous to be a rondero. We’d go disguised as women, with a group of women, many things no?’”

We asked Daniel, “What does it mean to be a rondero?”

“Social responsibilities, you take care of me and I will take care of you, that is, to be a rondero is the mutual help, one for all and all for one. Support. In religious terms it is to say, ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’”

“Why are the rondas important today? If there are judges, if there are police, why is it important that there are rondas?”

“This comes from before. It’s important because there’ve been civil guards, there’ve been judges, but there has always been corruption. I’ll even tell you an anecdote of a yunta that was robbed in San Antonio, Bambamarca. The police suspected the thief and they go and detain him but they didn’t side with the owner of the bull because they lacked proof, and in the night the police sent the thief to rob another bull in order to say, ‘See? If you’re still losing animals and ya he’s in jail then how’d he rob you?’ But they caught him and gave him a smack with all the police present there in Bambamarca. The rondas do the work that the police can’t do. Bueno, well they’ve been fighting since then, in ’85 they conquered the law, but they didn’t have any article, it only said for the ‘social peace’ with their ‘autonomy’ but they didn’t have articles that specified. Now yes, ya with the new law ya we are inside the international labor law no? That’s a constitutional right, the article 149 of the constitution, this is the only good that has come from the dictatorial constitution of Fujimori.

You see right now the media makes propaganda. They won’t put someone in the spotlight who robs a bank, the big thieves like the case of page 11 of Belaúnde, or in the epoch of the dictator that took office, the señor Juan Velasco, for example the media didn’t report it but I have proof
the señor Pedro Kuczynski that now is a candidate for president, he was director of the Reserve Bank and took advantage of the dictatorship and he escaped with millions of dollars, and they say nothing, the petroaudios, that’s what they call it. They’re protected here inside the courts no? So the small thieves rob a purse, a sheep, a donkey, at most, as I say, but he that robs a bank, the big thieves pue no. That’s why we say, ‘the rondas used to fight the small thieves that robbed at night but now we fight the big thieves that rob during the day.’”

His sombrero was bent, molded with age and exposure to the elements, some holes and fraying edges. His eyes shone with the clarity of mountain peaks. I’ll never forget that image: Daniel seemed to walk on the clouds. Occupying the moral high ground. He lives above the clouds. Enormous mountain slopes veiled in grays and blues of distance, sloping down to the Sendamal river. An incredible, overwhelming vision. All space seemed to funnel down to that slender snaking strip of water.

We told Daniel that all the songs, pictures and stories that we were recording would be put out with his name. His answer brought us back dead center to the issues at hand: “No, my name’s not important, rather what we want is that the campesino values what he is. The government always talks of development. Development isn’t having money in your wallet. It’s not having a house in Cajamarca or in Lima. It’s not having trucks or cattle. Development is having the capacity of knowledge in order to give value to all the potential resources that surround us, and that is what we don’t value, not even our own person. Here there are people that don’t even value their own personal I. The campesino, the pueblo does not value what it has, and people don’t have self-esteem, he or she does not value the personal I, that’s why in the song it says ‘huataco’. Huataco is someone that serves, prefers to receive a few cents and sell out their pueblo and serve a boss. That’s exactly what we lack: identity. Personal, familiar, communal, regional identity. That’s what
we lack, but luckily with the betrayal of this government of Ollanta, who spoke very beautifully [when running for office], it appears that Cajamarca, Bambamarca and Celendín are now known throughout the world. Human development is the intellectual base. What do we win with the development of resources, when the human development is low? So that’s what we want.”

We passed through fields of white and purple *papa* flowers: “Between my sister and I we have 250 native varieties of *papas*. Approximately 6 species, because there are 8 in the world. I like the *chacra*, the *papas*. This type doesn’t get the rancha, yeah *pues*, here you can see different types, look, these two are not the same, nor this one, they don’t have this one in Bambamarca, there are no conservationists of *papas* there, they only have two or three ‘improved’ varieties. I know *toditita* [every last *papa*]. I’m the only one, me and my sister in law.”

Luna, “The stones don’t bother the *papas*?”

Daniel, “Yes that’s why we have to work *a pulso, a pulso* [firm and steady]. You can’t do that with a plow. You have to do it by hand. But there’s an advantage here. With the acid rains they disintegrate, they decompose, makes them soft and what’s more, the heat, so that baths them, so natural *cal*! *Cal* is good for the *papas*, in order to control the acid or as a neutralizer. The *cal* alkalizes the land. *Ya* and these stones, that’s why the people here say where there are lots of stones they say ‘*rangra*’ here in Quechua, *rangra, ya*, which is to say forest of stones, so people say, they suffer but with confidence because there is natural fertilizer here. People say stony land is very good, the big ones as much as the little ones, because the action of the solar rays burns and the natural *cal* spreads. And this is the most natural that there is. So that’s the advantage. Each year we change the place of the *papas*. Yes, there has to be a rotation, and *bueno*, in the North I spent some time, I got first place in all of Lima, I have all the varieties from here.
For example, I am going to promote this, it’s the black pulp, all black for making refreshments, and they say that the dark color is an antioxidant. I want to promote it in the market sometimes, but I lack support. From here down, this variety that’s there, the rancha won’t attack it. Doesn’t need medicine, nothing. And these are long papas with an exquisite taste when parboiled. It has a taste more or less like butter. We have a seed bank where we hold our seeds, up in the choza. We conserve the varieties there. Nobody has them here, only my family. I went to the jungle cause of my papa. I almost went to Italy. I won to go to Italy but I thought it better to visit the jungle. A man from Sorochuco went to Italy, and when we went to the fair in La Molina, he with all his varieties had to run and ask me what type it was.”

Luna, “All this land is good to cultivate?”

Daniel, “All, all. More than anything, this is my love, my papas.”

Rain came suddenly so we crawled inside his choza. We nestled into a bed of hay. The darkness inside was illuminated by the bright entrance. His face emerging from the shadow of his sombrero as his weird voice spoke.

“Politicians have always lived off the masses. In the first place, the campesino, we’ve suffered, ever since the Spanish Invasion we’ve suffered the oppression, the colonialism, there’s been no freedom, because there’s only been freedom for the bourgeoisie, the hacendados. We have to put someone into politics that truly represents us like in Ecuador, Bolivia, not in its totality but ya pues little by little, because social change is like that, it’s an inheritance of centuries. We need to evaluate who is in the struggle, who has been permanently in the social organizations and support him pues but we still lack the social work. Some are only with the pueblo until they get power and then they forget. That’s what I call ‘Las Chanchas en Celo’ [‘The Pigs in Heat’]. We know that the politicians are bought by the mining or by the big companies like the one that wants to make
the hydroelectric dam and all that. They buy politicians. For example, this year Yanacocha is going to finance their candidates with 60 million, to what end? Soon they’ll come with gifts ya, sure thing, that’s why I call them Pigs in Heat because they use the pueblo to come to power and, in order to govern, they’re with the oppressor of the pueblo.” He gave us a sly grin and then asked if we wanted to hear the song.

“Ya the elections have come
Ya the pigs are in heat
They fill us with illusions
Of projects like cancha.
During the elections
We’re brother choceras
When they come to power
They kick us out the door
My campesina sisters
They call ‘em, ‘Lovely mothers,’
When they’re in their offices
They say, ‘Get out filthy bums!’
During the elections
They all preach ‘honesty’
When they come to power
They practice impunity
This is the life of the poor and the tale of democracy
The powerful get rich and disgrace for the pueblo.

In ’73 I went to high school in Trujillo in the San Juan college because my father ya didn’t help us. I studied at night and worked in the day. I caught the education reform of Velasco, the revolutionary government of socialist tint. I learned more about the difference of classes. I studied careers, I wanted to study farming. There was the possibility of basic labor education with middle management careers. After high school we would supposedly go to a professional training school but we finished the class and there were no schools pue ya. After the blow that Bermudez gave the pueblo, the movement began, there was the democracy. That’s where I woke up to a political, social vision. That’s where I found myself. From there the movement was where we went to study. In Lima I was part of the movement of students failed by the basic education. To be 19 years old
pue and to move some 1000, 1200 students, puccha that year I studied! That year ya Bermudes came out with a decree that we could study in the institutes. Then in ’79 we formed the Revolutionary Leftist Alliance, because after the dictatorship Bermudez gave ya the law ya that returned the democracy. That is Velasco was a military progressive but Bermudez, a military conservative, betrayed him. So in ’79 came the elections for the new constitution. I was just a young man in Lima. That’s where I met Morote, the 2nd in command of Sendero and also Hugo Blanco who was still with Patria Roja. We divided the stage in two groups, Patria Roja and Bandera Roja, Sendero. Patria Roja went with everybody on the left to form the United Left, the United Left that disappeared with the blow of Fujimori.

Ya pue, how many years has it been? In the epoch of Fujimori, I was named teniente [deputy] of the community, and the Fujimorism didn’t want to recognize me. 3 years I was teniente in my community but without official appointment. I’d make my documents as the teniente in charge, accidental teniente, jajajaj, and there came a point when I was in Celendín and a señora said, ‘listen señor are you Daniel Gil?’ ‘Yes’ In the market, ‘Ah, come, come,’ she said to me and she brought me to the bathroom no? and she surprised me, ‘listen’ she said, ‘you were at a meeting in Huasmin with the mayor?’ The mayor or the sub-prefect whatever he was in Celendín, had been part of a plan to plant flyers of Sendero on me. She said, ‘they’ve done this,’ ‘really?’ I said. ‘Yes’ ‘What’s your name?’ ‘It better that you don’t know my name,’ she said, ‘Chau, chau. This is what I have to tell you, believe if you believe me, if not…’ And as there’s a little priest that now is once again in Celendín, he’s from San Marcos, he promoted the vicarage of Human Rights in Celendín, so I went to file my accusation. Some time passed while I was handing out notices for the congress of Rondas in San Miguel, that’s where they promoted Goyo and all the sudden I felt something in my alforja, pa, behind me I saw 4 cops, I turn and 4 more in front, pa, they arrested me. They found
a roll of flyers in my alforja, ‘Who are you? Where you from?’ When they were finished question- ing me I said, ‘as you know, I have a denunciation already lodged,’ I told them, ‘this had been planned by so and so, on such and such date and in such and such place, and let’s go,’ and we went to see the book of denunciations, if not I would be pues… puccha and the little priest told them, ‘It gives me indignation when you act this way,’ there they calmed down, and I have this denun- ciation saved. If it weren’t for this lady, well sometimes God no? I’d be ya pues in jail ya, and without appeal… So bueno, they left and brought their documents and from there, I went free, but it was a scene. Destiny no? If it weren’t for that lady that alerted me pues, I’d be in life imprison- ment.

With this water problem that we had, the mayor was always against me because we obli- gated the mayor to contribute to the system of drinking water. He contributed 5% of the munici- pality so that they process the contract with a Swiss corporation. The mayor never wanted me to be the manager but my community elected me, he always boycotted but I stuck to reality and would always question and I noted that the cooperantes liked the way I questioned and inspected. In the first place, not one cooperante came to el Lirio, and the last evaluation el Lirio accomplished 87% of the goals according to a technical study, and out of 28 projects in the region, it was el Lirio that came in first and they gave the award to the mayor! I was pissed no? He was a faithful servant of Fujimori.

I always answer the police with a diplomatic vocabulary. One time they attacked me saying the ronderos are killers, thieves, that they’re rapists. ‘It’s ok señores,’ I said, ‘I accept.’ At that same time a newspaper had just reported that Bambamarca and Celendín are into drugs, that the ronderos are druggies, ‘Yes, I accept señor,’ I said, ‘but I believe that in all social structures there’s a little of everything. For example, there are cops that rape. I know cops that have been involved
in drug trafficking, but I cannot generalize to everybody. For example, I see that you are a beautiful person,’ jajajaja, so I had morally lowered him, like this, this is my style no? I’m always at the vanguard no? And when ya in the moments I enter at times. First you have to see how they act in order to see how they react. That’s how it is. So for example, they say that we’re terrorists, ‘I believe that, I accept, there’s a little of everything in society, but for me the terrorism here, the terrorism is he that makes terror, and here terror is made by the government through you all.’ So, they have to understand and change their job, ‘because here those that are making the terror are you all, but with orders from others, you no, it’s not your fault. I understand the necessity to bring home something to your family, but you all are making terror. And there I agree with the government that says that there are terrorists here. Perhaps a few campesinos are resentful and react the same way, or worse no?’ I told him no? ‘but I see that you are behaving well,’ ya I’d give them a complement ya, jajajaja. But yeah, some are abusive pue. I have a weakness, when I’m drunk I can’t stand to see cops. I tell my friends, when I’m drunk don’t let me go out, if I see a cop a spark goes off in my blood, like this, it’s better that they lock me inside. And I hardly drink, I try to avoid it… asu, but to be in solitary confinement for 23 days. They drowned me in a cylinder of water, and that was water with detergent, rocoto, yup.”

“Asu mare.”

“I’m talking about a case in ’79. They expelled me from the university for being an agitator of the masses. I was young, I had a girl and I wanted to make my home jajajaja and bueno at a fiesta, simply for dancing with her sister… she didn’t understand explanations and she gave me a slap, and I answered her with two pues, jajajaja and bueno I had my books of Marx, I also had my little gun with silencer.”

“Asu mare, a complete revolutionary.”
“No, it’s just that I liked to have it. And so the result was that she went and attacked me and they found me with everything pues, books of Marx, of Lenin, of Adolf Hitler, everything no? I had a work of Lenin, that was called The Processes of Revolution… so they took everything no? but yeah, I was a reader no, I had a thesis by Víctor Raúl, I also had one of the Second Vatican, of John XXIII, all books, I was a fanatic about books. But ya pues they took me away, but what are they going to take if I had nothing, I protested only for the injustice, yup that’s how it is.”

The rain dissipated so we crawled out of the choza and began to head back to Daniel’s house. We would have to start back to Santa Rosa soon.

“Bueno, there have been mines for a long time, the problem is the form of exploitation. Before they used traditional technology with tunnels and it would contaminate but not in great quantity like now. In an open pit there are subterranean gas leaks. They divert the waters and, even more, there’s the cyanide system that they use, what’s it called? leaching, and that pues is certain death. And the explosives! We know that urea is a nitrite of ammonium they mix with oil and that’s the anfo that they use, and now we’re getting cancer because the nitrite of ammonium dis-integrates with humidity. Nitrites decompose and in the end the nitrous aminos confuse themselves with the animo acids and the plants, humans, and animals absorb that. It’s a carcinogen of the first order, and apart from that they dry up the waters like we see in Hualgayoc. How many years has Hualgayoc had mining but they never diverted it’s waters. And Yanacocha says it has state of the art technology! It’s not technology to lower their costs. The lives of the rest of us doesn’t concern them. It’s not a state of the art technology for taking care of the environment or at least for reducing the negative impact, because there are no mines in the world that have zero impact. That’s why we’re against it, and above all for the climate of our cordilleras that are very diverse. It’s the only country in the world that has such a diverse geography. Here, our country. So I don’t accept any
type of projects, mega-projects, rather it is our desires that matter here, the micro projects. That’s how it is, that’s our concern.”

As a final comment Daniel said, “I’ve studied the origin of the computer, the origin is the quipus no? The Incas had that much earlier. Of course, they had their archive there pue. The first country that had archives, according to history, was the Greeks and afterward possibly the cultures here in South America. United States didn’t have them, England didn’t have archives. For example, the cave paintings that are up in the peaks could be an archive, in the huaca, the position of the stones is an archaeological archive, the archaeologists know this, but they don’t give it any importance here.”

The past is there right below the surface, beneath the modern atrophy, that dead layer of consciousness we call modernity. It’s there to be grabbed. Powerful individuals can invoke the past at will. Daniel was a guardian of collective memory, conscience, dignity, social critique, protest, justice. Whereas other Peruvians are ashamed to admit their humble origins, Daniel will never be anything but a cholo rondero and he’s proud of it. He is an inspiration for all Peruvians, and further still, all of us living under modernity with severed roots, a split identity and a divided heart. Daniel comes from both sides, intellectual and peasant, miner and campesina: who could know the conflict better? He’s lived it. He’ll never give up on his Andes, he’ll fight until the campesinos are redeemed and history along with them: “We should promote artisanal agriculture!” I can see him standing there in his ram’s wool pants and jacket, his open face, clear brown eyes and impish smile, with a coca ball bulging in his cheek. His smile told of all his experience as a rondero: the long nights making rounds, drinking cañazo, telling stories and jokes with his compañeros, and hour upon hour of chewing coca, from which his teeth were worn down flat. One look at his smile and you could see it all.
We walked home under the stars, frogs chirping in the darkness, tinkling like ice cubes in glass. A song of Daniel’s echoing in my ears…

Since the conquest of the Incas
Until our republican times
The *campesino* has endured
More than 5 centuries of injustice

The authorities sell themselves
All the lawyers enjoy themselves
Thieves, big and small
Disturb us with their mischief

Our *rondas campesinas* appear
Before the government repression
The big resentful thieves
Satanize us as terrorists

They keep barking
That they want to see me dead
Meanwhile I keep living
I have to be a *rondero*. 
6. RESISTANCE AS CARNIVAL

Figure 6.1
“Not by wrath, but by laughter, do we slay. Come, let us slay the spirit of gravity!”
— Thus Spake Zarathustra

“Let’s keep singing señores,
let’s rejoice that the party of Carnaval,
   God made for everybody,
      for the rich and for the poor.”
— popular Carnaval song

A month before the official week of Carnaval begins, people start to celebrate. The day after New Year, people are in the streets with their water balloons. As the muchachos are on vacation pues they dedicate themselves to soaking girls. But now-a-days it’s not uncommon for the girls to go on the offensive, roaming the streets with plastic buckets filled with globos [water balloons]. Or they’ll dump buckets of water on your head from a balcony. Or they’ll rent a moto and
you’ll get blasted unexpectedly as you walk down the street. Sometimes they’ll fill water guns with eter [perfume] mixed with water, or they’ll fill the tube of a large syringe with water, like what they use for injections in the buttocks only bigger, like 50 or 60 centimeters. During the month of January it’s best not to carry anything of value on your person. Wallets and cellphones are wrapped in plastic and buried deep in backpacks. Nobody is safe.

Then usually sometime in February, though the exact date changes every year, Carnaval begins, on a Saturday. The entrance of the King Momo (or Ño Carnavalon) marks the commencement of the festivities. King Momo is the ruler of Carnaval. He is a dummy made of an iron frame lined with paper, plastic and fabrics. His oversized, stuffed head has a face painted crimson. “The presence of the King, a being tied to the Devil, generates chaos and disorder. It is an opportunity to become free of tension and drown oneself in the celebration of good food and drink.”

King Momo is given chicha to drink and food to eat while he is carried through the principle avenues of Cajamarca amid swarming crowds. Thousands upon thousands from each neighborhood come out and everybody is painted from head to toe. The borracheraaaa [wild drunkenness] is unleashed. King Momo is called ‘the King of Happiness’ and also ‘the King of Perdition.’ At the end of Carnaval the people ‘bury’ him. People use the word ‘burial’, but really they burn him. It is a sacrifice of the King.

Saturday is the day when the people throw paint everywhere. The whole city is in the streets throwing water balloons filled with paint, dumping buckets and garbage cans of paint from balconies, smearing paint on everyone and everything. Someone comes up behind you and suddenly you feel a cold touch spread over your face. In that moment you’ve been transformed, you’ve become part of the festival, a spirit of Carnaval. Motos and trucks go by with people in the back spraying water and paint. People wear monster masks, wigs or empty buckets on their heads. There
is general drunkenness, dancing, and Carnaval music coming from all sides which mostly consists of a repeated snare drum rhythm, guitar and saxophone. The groups are led by the Clones, a character with an enormous cone hat, flamboyant clothing and a mask made from finely woven wire. They are the followers of King Momo.

In Celendín, they have their own variation. Instead of colorful paints, people smear black tar all over everything. They cover themselves head to foot in this tar and call themselves the Devils. If you happen to run into a band of the Devils on this day they will paint you black. The next day you can see their black hand prints and finger smears along the walls and sidewalks. Atuq told me: “They say that today the Blacks come out to do whatever they want! Today they celebrate the Devils’ coming out! Today is the party of the Devils! Today the Blacks that make wonders are the Devils, and they do whatever they want ya, the Devils are enjoying themselves, because this is the Black culture, all this. They are Devils and they are doing whatever they want. Ever since I was a child I have always seen this. Today the Devils enjoy themselves doing all this, painting all the world, everything!”

Sunday is the competition of patrols and comparsas. Each neighborhood presents their costumes, parading down the main avenues. The patrols and comparsas dance and sing before a jury that chooses the best of them. The winners become part of a collection of the best Carnaval costumes throughout the years. There is a great variety of costumes including Inca, Spaniards, Amazonian Indians, Native American Indians, devils and monsters, the King and Queen of Hearts, Mexican Day of the Dead, campesinos, and personified animals. All is a mad kaleidoscope of vivid colors.

Monday is the central day of Carnaval. The patrols and comparsas parade once again, this time accompanied by their Beauty Queens chosen by the neighborhood and their allegorical cars.
Monday is considered one of the most picturesque spectacles in all of Peru. At least sixty allegorical cars from each neighborhood and institution parade through the principle streets of the city and the Plaza de Armas. The Queens receive the applause and whistles of admiration from the public lined up on the streets. For five hours nobody moves from their places, in sun or in rain. Spectators guard their places with benches and chairs since the night before. Some sleep in the street so that nobody can take their spot. I’ve even heard of people saving their spots for a week in advance.

Fat Tuesday is the day of the death and wake of King Momo. Many people are dressed for mourning, and the ‘widows’ of King Momo, who are men dressed as women, do not tire of crying over his coffin. The pueblo ‘suffers’ this death with joy. Cigarettes, liquor and a succulent head soup is distributed among the attendees.

On Ash Wednesday they perform the ‘burial’ of King Momo in the Baños del Inca. There, before the entire Cajamarquino pueblo, they read the will of King Momo. This document is composed of picarescos [snide, sarcastic comments] directed at the authorities and well known people of the area, which causes total hilarity among those present. After reading the will they proceed to burn King Momo amid the inconsolable cries of his ‘widows’. “But we know that next year King Momo will be here once again to make our lives joyful.” And everything ends with the dance of the contestants.

The fiesta of the unsha comes after the central days of Carnaval, after Ash Wednesday. Every neighborhood has their unshas, and every pueblo also. The unsha is a tree that people cut down and then they plant it again and hang lots of gifts on it. People put fruits like oranges, bananas, apples, sugar cane etc. and also things such as bowls, jars, jugs, tubs or trays for washing cloths etc… shirts, pants, jackets. After a few hours of singing, eating, and dancing around the
unsha in a big circle holding hands, the people begin to cut it down, couple by couple. For example, a man and a woman come out from the circle that they are dancing around the unsha and they give a hachaso [big old hack with an axe], and like this everybody that is in the fiesta gets a turn until the tree falls and all the people run to grab all the gifts that were in the branches. And right there they begin to appoint who will give what for the next year. For example, you appoint yourself for next year to give half a dozen shirts, a 100 oranges or apples etc… The couple that finally cuts down the unsha becomes the padrinos and are in charge of next year’s unsha.

THE CARNAVAL OF ALL THE WORLD

Atuq lamented the loss of Carnaval culture in Cajamarca but, he told me, there are some neighborhoods in Cajamarca, some organizations that still go out as before.

LIC LIC: “Oh yeah? And how was it before?”

ATUQ: “Whistling, singing songs of Indians, with their clothing of Cajamarquino Indians, but now the majority wear Brazilian cloths, clothing of Spain. And the Beauty Queens! I believe that this all began with the appearance of media like the television, this, ya, and they always aired the Carnaval of Rio de Janeiro, and since then the neighborhoods began to organize themselves just like those of Brazil with their long garments and they carry feathers, this, and the Cajamarquino Carnaval didn’t do that. But tomorrow the costume of Santiago as a peasant will be especially beautiful.”

A musician from Cajamarca told me:

“Carnaval is a Roman custom. It’s an imitation that the Spaniards brought with them, they got it from the Romans, but here ya the Carnaval has become part of the Andean customs, of Cajamarca. It’s a fusion as they say no? because, bueno, according to the religious they say that carne [meat, flesh] and aval is from the God Aval. You know who’s the God Aval no? It’s a pagan god, bueno, the Christians saw him like a pagan god of the Romans pue no? If I’m not mistaken. I don’t know, but bueno that’s where you get the mixture. So then what does Carnaval signify? It’s the desenfreno, the desenfreno where you relax yourself ya, that is, you get rid of all these prejudices, all these habits that oppress you, and in that time you relax pues no? you go and meet a girl and it goes along normal and yes it happens, it will happen and yeah, that’s why there is a copla that says,
'You want Carnavales? Take Carnavales! And in nine months, you’re washing diapers!' Before you’d have to wash the diapers and now they’re disposable, jajaja-jajaj yes or no? jajajajaja ah?

The origins of Carnaval: well as far back as I remember, right now I am 57 years old, so ya more or less you realize how many years I’ve been living the Cajamarquino Carnaval no? In my time each neighborhood would put together their gang, but they’d do it spontaneously, not like now when it’s so organized by the municipality and so much idiocy. It was the custom for each one to elect their own type of costume. They’d put on masks like the Mexican cachascanistas that now are of saints and they’d go out and if along the way the gang of the neighborhood San Sebastian happened to meet the gang of San José… it was an enormous rivalry and they’d come to blows, fist-fights, or lampiñas as the Argentinians say, they’d beat the dirt out of each other and afterward, normal, they’d continue on their way, the following day, God knows, if you found a friend in San José with a black eye247 you’d know what’d happened and that was common no? Yes yes, they’ve really civilized it, before it was more popular. You could have a friend there and you wouldn’t even know if he had hit you or not. You’d take off your mask, you were all battered and your own friend that lives in San José had done it to you, that was the custom, and this pues they’ve been losing now. They’ve really civilized, the municipality has cut it, ya they’ve lost all these customs ya, ya no ya it’s not like before. That was typical of Cajamarca.

Another custom was for example you’d go out with a group of friends, you’d go out singing the Carnaval. Now you’d come to a house and they’d receive you with such a natural tenderness. They’d kill their pig, amass the breads, you’d arrive to their house, they’d receive you with a natural tenderness no? You’d arrive singing, ‘Here I am because I’ve come. Because I’ve come, here I am. If you show me a bad face, as I’ve come, I’ll go,’ but who’s going to receive you bad pues no? That was the custom. Everybody’d make their chicha, their chicarrones, their bread, and you’d have a party there. The owners of the house would make you dance with their daughter, with their cousin, with their neighbor. They’d make you dance with everybody and if you got bombed and fell down tired there, then they’d give you a bed if it was possible, they’d give you a couch and cover you with a blanket, and the following day you’d go, normal no? You’d get up, they’d give you your ram soup, as it was Carnaval no? and there you’d continue on. You’d go thanking, again singing, and you’d go to another house, exactly the same, and like this, the same routine no? A thing that now they’ve lost pues. Imagine it! I tell you when I was a young guy, I wouldn’t come home for a week and a half, like this, we didn’t know where we’d dawn nor where we’d wake, jajajajajajajaja that’s how Carnaval was, we passed it like this. Now much has changed ya, much they’ve civilized Carnaval. Before it was like this.

A group of young men would meet up, after fattening up the horses so that they could withstand the run, cause it wasn’t just one day, it was a lot of days, for example here in this community there will be an unsha today, in the other community also, and they’d go house to house, or unsha to unsha looking for a girl, singing carnavales, some even gave their own horse a drink, and they’d continue pues no? Normally they say that began with the young men of earlier times. They wanted to
impress the parents of the girls so they’d arrive on that day, at some house for example, and would ask for the hand. Some say that if the father accepted, the girl would go to the house of the young man. He’d take her, that same day ya he’d take her and the boy ya that day he’d have a wife. Jajajaja that’s why normally they say, ‘Carnaval is to blame’, because ya folks get married during Carnaval so as not to lose the custom. Normally in the country, the young men get a girl in the time of Carnaval. I’ve even become accustomed to this custom. For example, they didn’t court the girl much, with a few glances, a few looks, the boy went to the house and asked the papá for the hand. If they accepted you then that night you’d sleep with the girl, but if they didn’t accept you than they’d hit you with a stick and throw you out.

My guitar would leave with six strings and it’d return to the house with two strings. You’d continue trying to sing the Carnaval with two little strings no? jajajaja it used to be like this, along the path you’d break many strings, but no matter, we’d continue the Carnaval, with our little drum, or if not, with a little guiro that sounds like this shu, shu, shu… or the rondín that we call the harmonica. That was the most that they had no? And with the guitar, the Carnaval has a special tuning ah, I’m going to teach it to you now. The base is like this: tararararará, tarararara. Yeah, just look, they play the guitar with just the right hand, and the other hand in the pocket and here with it’s strap pue. It’s monotone but at the same time it’s fun no? Why? Because it keeps you in this enthusiasm of Carnaval no? Wait, I’m going to bring the guitar. Once it’s tuned, the guitar can play any Carnaval. You just have to learn to strum the Carnaval, that’s it! Carnaval songs have only one chorus. The “Cílulo”, “La Carolina”, “Cumbe-Cumbe” and “La Matarina” are some of the traditional compositions of the Cajamarquino Carnaval. The people of Namora make guitars no? Before they made guitars, they made them but artisanally pue but, not like these that come calibrated, not that. For example they’d grab it, put one piece of wood there and another one here and they’d just mark the frets with a pencil ta, ta, ta, ta. It’s not a guitar for just any type of music, carnavalera pues no? You put this tuning and just strum, like that they’d go all night long.

Yes, here’s the Carnaval of all the world. They play it with harmonica, with some little drums that they make from penca, the blue penca from which they make tequila, that’s the trunk, they dry it, they scrape it and they put the skin of a goat or a sheep and they tighten it and that is the little drum that sounds very beautiful and is very typical and is a repetitive song, almost monotonous but, as we say, it has certain rhythms. The neighborhood San Pedro is: taratatata, taratatata, while the neighborhood San Sebastian is: tararara, tararara. Now in the countryside it’s a little more traditional, more ancient as they call it here, a little foreign, almost as if the peasants were crying: larararayray.

Well now ya in many neighborhoods ya they have globalized so that ya it’s not seen ya. Have you seen? They only do the tarola and nothing more but before Carnaval was much better because they used accordion, the rondín, the harmonica, and their cajoncito but now they’ve spoiled it. They do pure tarola nothing more ya.

And then the coplas start, coplas and coplas. The coplas are picaras pues no? For example the men say some naughty things to the women, and then the
women respond with others. All the coplas are picaras. The lyrics are picaras, así es. Some are even lewd ya, media rojas. The men and women bother each other. It’s a form of confrontation. They face your machismo and you face their feminismo. That is the famous counterpoint. There are the famous contests, no? They choose beauty queens. There’s a contest of coplas also, of course! The National Institute of Culture organizes it. It’s a little more formal, but the true Carnaval is in the streets, in the plazuelas, in the districts also no?”

CARNIVAL COPLAS

MEN: The 15 year old woman ya is thinking of fucking…
WOMEN: Shut up half-breed faggot, you look like Alcatraz, ya you can’t from the front, now they’ll give it to you from behind.
MEN: The gals of this time are like hot pepper, ya even though they don’t ripen well, ya the worm eats them.
WOMEN: The women are rosy-cheeked like the virgin of heaven and the man is hated like the devil in hell.
MEN: When I had skates, you wouldn’t even look at me. When I had a bike, you washed your tits, and now I have my motorcycle, you even hand over your ass, and now I have a truck, you even blow on my bugle.
WOMEN: You goat, your father’s a goat, your grandfather and your uncle are goats. You want me to want you? You motherfucking goat.
MEN: You gave it to me once and brought me before the judge. Drop the nonsense, lie down and give it to me again.
WOMEN: For Conga, not lagoons. That the mining continue! So that the cuckolds abound and the whoring continues.
MEN: And at the point of that mountain there was a plant of albeca. I thought that it was you, when it was the shit of a cow.
WOMEN: What a pretty face you have, I have a better ass, with your face you do nothing, with my ass I shit.
MEN: Shut up, face of my egg, wig of my pubes, don’t come to me with eg-gery, or else I’ll fuck you and leave you.
WOMEN: I want you like I want my caca, like my caca I want you, because if I don’t go to the bathroom, if I don’t shit I’ll die.
MEN: Ya I’ve told you that I want you and I’m obligated to endure, one little son that you have, his grandmother will have to support him.
WOMEN: They tell me that they call you, half burned castle, you don’t even arrive at the dove, you’ve left me with desire.
MEN: Like a fool I believed you, and in the night in which you gave it to me, I drowned in legs.
WOMEN: What does my life matter to you, if my life is like this, if I was born to be a drunk, why do you give a shit?
MEN: They shut up, they shut up, the pendejas shut up. They shut up, they shut up, the pendejas shut up.
WOMEN: Rice, rice with lentils, your sisters are *pendejas*. Rice, rice with prunes, they’re *pendejas* and faggots.
MEN: If you want me not to go, give me rice to eat, and you will see how it’s enough for me, for your sister and for you.

**TRUE OBSCENE SOLIDARITY**

Recently Atuq told me, “They killed Hitler of Yagen.” I gave my condolences, “Ay ay ay, que pena” and then Atuq said something which, in its beauty and wisdom, epitomized for me the Carnaval spirit: “More fighters will be born. When a fighter dies, he never [really] dies.” I tried to tell Atuq that I was writing about how Carnaval and the Resistance share the same spirit, driven by happiness, jokes, dance, songs, that life and death are cycles of the Pacha Mama, and that peasant laughter will beat the seriousness of the authorities. All he said was, “I’m going to Yagen, to the funeral of Hitler. I’m going to *meterme un bolo* [chew some coca].” Understandably, at that moment he wasn’t in the mood for philosophical discussions, but I know that he agreed. Another time Atuq said to me: “Laughter is food for the spirit, for the soul, for life and for death also. There has to be a lot of laughter to win the struggles and change the world.” And it wasn’t just Atuq. I found the spirit of Carnaval uncrownings alive in the chants of the peasants:

“The *pueblo* woke up, the mine is fucked!”
“Ollanta, coward, nobody wants you, not even your father!”
“Urgent, urgent, a new president!”
“Treachery Ollanta, if you want more money, rent your ass!”

When the Guardians of the Lagoons went to Lima for the *Cumbre de los Pueblos* [People’s Summit on Climate Change], which was an alternative to the World Climate Summit, they carried a sign that said, “COP 20 Pure Shit.”

Another time Máxima said to me: “With jokes, they say, we must win the struggle. Without jokes, the struggle’s not worth it because if we’re very serious the people might say that we’re angry.” First there is the affirmation that jokes are a weapon. Freud acknowledges this when he
says that obscene jokes can become a weapon against authority and serve as an escape from its pressure. (699) But what really gets me is that Máxima has all the reason in the world to be angry! This leads to the second point: resistance is not only social and political but existential. The struggle wouldn’t be worth it if we become serious and angry like the engineers, prosecutors, judges and police! Máxima’s style of resistance means retaining our joy, our lives, our culture. It’s not worth it if we lose our souls in the process. As Nietzsche said, “beware that, when fighting monsters, you yourself do not become a monster.”

At a talk titled “The Ambiguity of Obscenity” given at the European Graduate School in 2009, Slavoj Žižek asked, “What is the symbolic point in which we really become friends? If we remain at this official level, ‘oh what a wonderful food you have, folkloric dances,’ fuck off… the moment you exchange an obscenity, at that point it begins.” Žižek affirms that such jokes “play an extremely positive role in establishing true obscene solidarity.” We become accomplices by breaking the law together, laws which in this case are societal norms. This is one of the profoundest lessons that I took away from my time with the Guardians.

LIC LIC: “How’s it go? What’d you say?”
MÁXIMA: “Es dici, cuando el hombre esta de malas, su mujer pare de otros. Ja! Ja! Ja!”
[That is to say, when the man is bad tempered, his woman gives birth to babies from other men.]
There is an explosion of laughter.
“Did you hear?”
“From other men?”
MÁXIMA: “Yes, from other men!”
Everyone laughs again.
I decide to tease Máxima a little, “Ay ay ay these are jokes of campesinos…”
MÁXIMA: “Ah ha! Of campesinos pue, I pue am a campesina ¡Ja! ¡Ja! ¡Ja! ¡Ja! ¡Peruana!”
“¡Jajaja!”, Everybody is laughing, “¡Ja! ¡Ja! ¡Ja!”
MÁXIMA: “I speak in the style of my Cajamarca!”
She turns my jab around, proud of being a peasant woman. I try to get her to say another one, but I misspeak, “¿Y que del loro? ¿Que pasa con el loro?” I was trying to say [“And what of the parrot? What’s up with the parrot?”] but the word for ‘parrot’ is feminine, ‘la lora’ not, as I was saying ‘el loro.’ Máxima sighs, “¿Qué pasa con el oro?” [“What’s up with the gold?”]

Luna corrects me, “la lora!”
Without missing a beat, Máxima says, “Se jodio la lora por habladora.”
[“The parrot fucked itself for being a talker.”]
¡Ja! ¡Ja! ¡Ja!

The first joke is subversive in its undermining of patriarchy. It openly declares a woman’s sexual freedom. The second joke is almost like meta commentary on the idiot gringo that is asking the endless questions and misspeaking. And let us not forget her quick-witted improvisation, “What’s up with the gold?” taking advantage of my poor Spanish to put everything into sharp focus. I call them jokes but they’re more like funny sayings. They’re simple jokes which hinge on rhyme, or near rhymes (malas and otros is not exact). Like Freud said, “the technique of these jokes is often very poor while their laughing effect is enormous.”

With obscene jokes there are no formal demands: “Not until we come to the refined and cultured social stratum does the formal determination of wit arise. The obscenity becomes witty and is tolerated only if it is witty.” But not so with peasants: “It is curious that common people so thoroughly enjoy such smutty talk, and that it is a never-lacking activity of cheerful humor.” What would Freud say about Máxima?

“The power that makes it difficult or impossible for women, and to a lesser extent men too, to enjoy undisguised obscenity we call ‘repression’, and we recognize in it the same psychical process… in cases of serious [psychological] illness… We grant that higher culture and education have a great influence on the development of repression… what was once felt to be agreeable now appears unacceptable and is rejected with all the force of the psyche.”

So would this mean that Máxima, due to her sheer ability to laugh at obscenity is a liberated woman, free from the shackles of repression? In a sense, yes. “When we laugh over a delicately obscene witticism, we laugh at the identical thing which causes laughter in the ill-bred man when
he hears a coarse, obscene joke; in both cases the pleasure comes from the same source. The coarse, obscene joke, however, could not incite us to laughter, because it would cause us shame or would seem to us disgusting; we can laugh only when wit comes to our aid.” 268 But it didn’t cause us shame at all. Man or woman, it didn’t matter. We all laughed together. 269
THE NECESSITY FOR REVERSAL

“The necessity for reversal is so important that it had, at one time, its consecration: there is no constitution of society which does not have, on the other hand, the challenging of its foundations; rituals show it: the saturnalia or festivals of madmen reversed the roles. [And the profundity from whence descended blindly the feeling which determined the rituals—the numerous, intimate links between the themes of the carnival and the putting to death of kings indicate this sufficiently enough.]” (Inner Experience, p. 89-90)

Here we have the meaning of Carnaval condensed to its most fundamental expression: the reversal of all power structures. Furthermore, this need for reversal was consecrated, it was made sacred during Carnaval. Now this is strange because during Carnaval precisely what is consecrated is the desecration of what is considered sacred, that is, authority and official order. But this need to reverse, to desecrate, to breakout and transgress is also the need to laugh and to dance. These are crucial needs of both individuals and communities. A tremendous force is released during Carnaval as eroticism and drunkenness flood the streets. It is a force of joy and mockery, a primordial impulse with roots stretching back to the Roman Saturnalia, the return of the Golden Age of Saturn. Taken together, Carnaval and the Inkarri myth are the two aspect of the Andean Utopia in present day Cajamarca.

During Carnaval the mayor dresses up like a peasant! Perhaps this is nothing more than what anthropologists would call ‘licensed transgression’, a temporary suspension of the rules which, after a given time, will return to normal. In the end, the status quo is reaffirmed. But when coupled with a peasant resistance movement, this force has the potential to truly change things.

As Michael Holquist writes in his prologue to Bakhtin’s Rabelais and His World: “Bakhtin’s carnival…is revolution itself. Carnival must not be confused with mere holiday or, least of all, with self-serving festivals fostered by governments, secular or theocratic. The sanction for carnival derives ultimately not from a calendar prescribed by church or state, but from a force that
preexists priests and kings and to whose superior power they are actually deferring when they appear to be licensing carnival.” Carnaval marks “the suspension of all hierarchic differences, of all ranks and status; carnivalesque revelry is marked by absolute familiarity.” (Bakhtin, 246) It is a “complete liberation from the seriousness of life” (247), a liberation from the serious world of fear and oppression. Bakhtin stresses the popular character of the Carnaval: “It is a festival offered not by some exterior source but by the people themselves.” (246) And “beyond the crowd, there is the whole world, unfinished, uncompleted, which generates in dying and is born to die.” (165) Carnaval is characterized by its unfinished and open character as opposed to the finished and closed quality of established order: “official culture is founded on the principle of an immovable and unchanging hierarchy in which the higher and the lower never merge” (166). In contrast, Carnaval brings all things down in the world, returning them to the lower stratum of the body and the earth, returning them from whence they came, the origin that was denied through sublimation.

“The mighty thrust downward into the bowels of the earth, into the depths of the human body…is…inherent in all forms of popular-festive merriment and grotesque realism. Down, inside out, vice versa, upside down, such is the direction of all these movements. All of them thrust down, turn over, push headfirst, transfer top to bottom, and bottom to top, both in the literal sense of space, and in the metaphorical meaning of the image. We also see the downward movement in fights, beatings, and blows; they throw the adversary to the ground, trample him into the earth. They bury their victim. But at the same time they are creative; they sow and harvest… The downward movement is also expressed in curses and abuses. They too, dig a grave, but this is a bodily, creative grave. Debasement and interment are reflected in carnival uncrownings, related to blows and abuse. The king’s attributes are turned upside down in the clown; he is king of a world ‘turned inside out.’ Finally, debasement is the fundamental artistic principle of grotesque realism; all that is sacred and exalted is rethought on the level of the material bodily stratum or else combined and mixed with its images. We spoke of the grotesque swing, which brings together heaven and earth. But the accent is placed not on the upward movement but on the decent.” (370-371)

In Cajamarca, the Carnaval spirit presides throughout the year. It is present during New Year celebrations when each house makes a dummy of El Año Viejo [The Old Year] from old
clothing. These dummies are burned in the streets as children and adults dance over their flaming corpses. In Cajamarca, Old Year dummies were often named President Ollanta Humala, Mauro Siles, and Roque Benavides. As Bakhtin writes, during Carnaval, “the old year, the old winter, the old king, [is] turned into a clown.” (217)

Then there’s Corpus Cristi: I’m drunk, dancing with the vieja [old lady], who is a man dressed as a woman. The bombo [drum] is throbbing like a heart. I take my sombrero off, bend down, and wave it in front of the vieja. Atuq narrates: “give air to the pussy with the sombrero, and she raises her petticoat and urinates in your sombrero and you drink it and wet the ball.” Referring to the coca ball in my cheek. The second time I threw the sombrero of imaginary urine in her face. The crowd of people die with laughter. In between songs, Atuq whispers more advice to me, “take the bullhorn away from the old woman and shove it up her ass.” The vieja is taking swigs of cañaso from the bullhorn. “Knock down the old woman! Fuck the old woman! Who will win?” And Atuq’s last bit of advice when the music ends? “Launch a ¡Viva la Puga, Viva el Pincho y Conga no Va Carajo!” I second guess because of the trouble I’ve had. They’ll think I’m malcriado [ill-bred, rude], but then I do it anyway and everyone, men & women, crack up. A revolutionary gesture? To yell out obscenities with a pure heart, to affirm the pussy & the dick? — YES — and the culture here embraces it, loves it and laughs. But does it reaffirm the stereotypes that the peasants are ignorant, dirty, uncultured, burros [donkeys]? Or does it revalue the peasant by laughing together in good will, breaking the repression of church, state and market? Creating a collective moment of enjoyment within their cultural forms, a moment of pride in their traditions, in defiance to the shame such obscenities would provoke in polite society. Of course there is some disagreement. Maruja, Atuq’s wife, says it’s bad that Atuq teaches me bad things, picardías malas. Atuq counters, “But the people laughed, se vacilen.”
Carnaval finds joy in metamorphosis and becoming. It celebrates death and debasement as a stepping stone to new life. At the heart of Carnaval is an ambivalence: “birth and death are not an absolute beginning and end but merely elements of continuous growth and renewal.” (Bakhtin, 88) Death provokes boundless despair, but the death of the king pitches everybody’s passions to the extreme limits of madness. In Cajamarca, the death of the king has deep resonance, echoing the execution of Atahualpa, the Spanish Conquest and the rupture of history. As Bataille writes, “the death of the king is apt to produce the most pronounced affects of horror and frenzy. The nature of the sovereign demands that this sentiment of defeat, of humiliation, always provoked by death, attain such a degree that nothing, it seems, can stand firm against the fury of animality. No sooner is the event announced than men rush in from all quarters, killing everything in front of them, raping and pillaging to beat the devil.” Yet Carnaval reverses this violent frenzy, placing joy before death: “What is certain is that the lure of the void and of ruination does not in any way correspond to a diminished vitality, and that this vertigo, instead of bringing about our destruction, ordinarily is a prelude to the happy explosion which is the festival.”

The philosophy of Georges Bataille is “a philosophy founded on the experience of laughter.” Laughter is a happy explosion that invades us suddenly and “overturns our habitual course.” For Bataille, “this joy cannot be separated from a tragic feeling.” To laugh is to pass very abruptly from the sphere of the known to the sphere of the unknown. The stable order of the world is suddenly overthrown as laughter frees us from the bonds of discursive thought: “to speak, to think, short of joking… is to dodge existence: it is not to die but to be dead.” Laughter excites in us an “intimate overturning,” a “suffocating surprise” which calls life itself into question. Bataille’s laughter is directed at philosophy as a form of rebellion. He describes his thought as a
“a perpetual rebellion against itself”.284 Regarding the ‘work’ of philosophic thought, Bataille declares, “the only object of my thought is play, and in play my thought, the work of my thought, is annihilated.”285 We could say that Bataille’s entire philosophy is carnivalesque. It is no accident that Bataille took the pen name Dianus when he first published “Guilty” in 1940. I imagined that the peasants and I were laughing with Bataille, and since Bataille’s laughter is Nietzsche’s laughter, across time and space, I imagined we were all laughing in one great joyous outburst aimed at the oppressors. This explosive outburst, where experience itself becomes a revolt, is the dream-weapon: “I laughed as perhaps one had never laughed.”286

Nietzsche made it his goal “to assassinate two millennia of anti-nature and desecration of man”.287 In Genealogy of Morals, Nietzsche writes: “Man has all too long had an evil eye for his natural inclinations, so that they have finally become inseparable from his bad conscience; An attempt at the reverse would in itself be possible- but who is strong enough for it?”(95) Everything depends on this hint of possibility, the impossible reversal. This is not just deconstruction as a thought experiment but unbuilding as a way of life, the way to life.

In the chapter ‘Redemption’, Zarathustra sets forth this formula for the redemption of the past, “to transform every ‘It was’ into ‘Thus would I have it!’ - that only do I call redemption!”(149) What is needed is “the Will of a creator.”(151) But Zarathustra is careful to repeat, “Not backward can the Will will; that it cannot break time and time’s desire- that is the Will’s lonesomest tribulation.”(150) Of this impossibility he seems quiet certain, that is, until he once again begins to contemplate redemption: “Hath the Will become its own deliverer and joy-bringer? Hath it unlearned the spirit of revenge and all teeth-gnashing? And who hath taught it reconciliation with time, and something higher than all reconciliation?”(151) Then Zarathustra asks the fateful question, “Who hath taught it also to will backward? -But at this point in his discourse it chanced that Zarathustra
suddenly paused, and looked like a person in the greatest alarm… But after a brief space he again laughed, and said soothingly: ‘It is difficult to live amongst men, because silence is so difficult—especially for a babbler’” (151)

Another piece to the puzzle occurs in ‘The Vision and the Enigma’: “A young shepherd did I see, writhing, choking, quivering, with distorted countenance, and with a heavy black serpent hanging out of his mouth.”(168) Zarathustra calls to the shepherd, “Bite! Bite!” (168). He calls this “the vision of the lonesomest one!…—what did I then behold in parable? And who is it that must come some day?… Who is the man into whose throat all the heaviest and blackest will thus crawl?”(168)

—The shepherd however bit as my cry had admonished him; he bit with a strong bite! Far away did he spit the head of the serpent: and sprang up.—

No longer shepherd, no longer man— a transfigured being, a light-surrounded being, that laughed! Never on earth laughed a man as he laughed!

O my brethren, I heard a laughter which was no human laughter,— and now gnaweth a thirst at me, a longing that is never allayed.

My longing for that laughter gnaweth at me: oh, how can I still endure to live!— And how could I endure to die at present!— (168)

The secret lies in this godlike laughter, a laughter all the richer for having known the depths of sorrow. It is the secret which can reverse the nightmare of history, combating “irreversible time”, the “homogenous, empty time” of modernity. Only in ‘The Convalescent’ does Zarathustra finally accept his fate as “the teacher of the eternal return”(225) realizing himself to have been the shepherd from his vision: “And how that monster crept into my throat and choked me! But I bit off its head and spat it away from me.”(223) What a long journey Zarathustra has endured to be able to say Yes to eternity!

Everything goeth, everything returneth; eternally rolleth the wheel of existence. Everything dieth, everything blossometh forth again; eternally runneth on the year of existence. Everything breaketh, everything is integrated anew; eternally buildeth itself the same house of existence. All things separate, all things again greet one another; eternally true to itself remaineth the ring of existence. Every
moment beginneth existence, around every ‘Here’ rolleth the ball ‘There.’ The middle is everywhere. Crooked is the path of eternity (223)

In laughter we find the ultimate power of reversal and redemption. Walter Benjamin wrote that humor had a *retroactive force* because it will constantly call into question every victory, past and present, of the rulers.288 Freud too realized the power that jokes have to redeem history, especially obscene jokes, their ability to return us to primordial, infantile reservoirs of pleasure: “Owing to the repression brought about by civilization many primary pleasures are now disapproved by the censor and lost. But the human psyche finds renunciation very difficult; hence we discover that [obscene jokes] furnish us with a means to make the renunciation retrogressive and thus to regain what has been lost.”289 When put into the context of the redemption inherent in the Inkarri myth and Carnaval’s return to the Golden Age, laughter has the power to reverse history.

**PHYSICAL EXERCISE OPENS UP THEIR MINDS**

LIC LIC: “The punishments of the *Roneros* are really funny.”
ATUQ: “Well, *pue*, we punish whomever…”
“Frogs! hop like frogs!”
“And 20 pushups!”
“First take off your shoes!”
“To the mayor?”
“Whoever it is, the police!”
“The *compañeros* of Unión del Norte, from there in Pallán, they did it to the police, the police went to mistreat the *roneros* and threaten them. In that moment they called to the other bases and they rounded up the police, eh they took away their weapons, this was last year ah, they took away their weapons, told them to take off their boots, shoes and everything, and they made them walk, made them go round in bare feet, without anything…”
“In the *plaza*?”
“In the countryside, through the hills, that’s *campo*, that’s the rural zone, and after that they made them take off everything, without anything on.”
“All their cloths.”
“Yup, and now the *Roneros* use the cloths of the police when they want to work safely, they go with that clothing. They threw them out naked, without anything.”
“How many police?”
“Like 6 police, more or less, and they gave them their chicotazos [whips] also.”
“Their chicotitos, as they say, their chiquita.***”
“And they made a promise to not disrespect the Rondas, immediately no?
That’s it.”

Can you imagine being whipped in front of a large crowd with a long, twisted, dried bull penis? That’s the symbol of the Ronderos: their vinsa or fuete. As you can see, the discipline of the Rondas is carnivalesque: there is a joviality which accompanies their blows and beatings, their debasement of the police and miners. I heard many such stories told with pride, but the best one concerned the time that the Ronderos caught the engineers of ALA [National Authority of Water]. The telling of this story was sparked when the engineer in question came over to our table and greeted Atuq during lunch.

ATUQ: “The man that just came to greet us is Tarrillo. He is an engineer ya that worked in ALA, and we disciplined him in the Ronda, and he was the one that called his boss, he said to him, ‘come, bring all the documents, everything’s great’ jajajaja. We offered to not discipline him ya but with the idea that he bring his boss, and his boss believed him, jajajaja, and came and we beat the shit out of the boss, but also him, but him ya less ya jajajajajaj and you see puccha he comes to greet us carajo jajaja.”

LIC LIC: “Jajajaja so you made them do push ups and parade in the middle of the night?”

ATUQ: “It was really intense, pucha, I’m going to tell you everything, with details pucta but of the gran pucta, I’m going to tell you, ya, this story is lovely, really lovely jajajaja but he came over di? He came over to greet me, you see? He gave me his hand.”

LIC LIC : “Jajajajaja.”

ATUQ: “Mh, this Tarrillo is also a pendejo huevón, with each push up that he did pucta he’d make as if he was tired ya and roll over carajo, pendejo huevón. He’d roll over, say that ya he was tired, to ya not give him any more, and he would rest pue, and when he did kangaroo292 in the air and say, ‘I pissed myself, I pissed myself, let me go to the bathroom,’ and he’d go to the bathroom and take a long time, the bastard, jajajaja.”

LIC LIC : “Jajajaja!”

ATUQ: “He was a pendejo, mh.”

He took a moment to eye a young waitress, “look, look Lorena, she’s arrechísima [horny as hell] Lorena carajo,” then he continued, “Those of ALA,
Autonomous Authority of Water\textsuperscript{293}, had come giving resolutions favorable to Yanacocha, for the Conga project to utilize the waters of the high part of Huasmin, of our lagoons, of our rivers, of the Sendamal, they were giving \textit{ya} resolutions \textit{von}, \textit{ya} and, when we \textit{campesinos} go to ask permission to use the waters for irrigation, \textit{puccha} they’d take three years, four years, and Yanacocha asked for permission and in 15 days \textit{ya} they had authorization to use these waters to wash their roads and take the water away in cisterns \textit{no pue}, \textit{ya} and \textit{ya} they had the authorization \textit{rapidísimo huevón, ya}, and they even said in these resolutions, yes, it came out in the newspaper Panorama Cajamarquino that whoever is not in agreement has the right to complain during two or three days, I believe, \textit{ya} and these two or three days were a holiday! It was near Christmas and New Year! Not one office was open. \textit{Ya} and the Panorama, here, nobody reads it, and it doesn’t get out to the communities like Jadibamba, like Numero Ocho, it doesn’t arrive, and so they were practically on the same side, the Conga-Yanacocha project with those of the Autonomous Authority of Water of Celendín. That’s why the \textit{campesinos} lodged a complaint in the \textit{Rondas Campesinas} here in Celendín. The abuse that these \textit{señores} of the National Authority of Water were doing! \textit{Ya} and when these \textit{señores} went to Llanguat to do an analysis of water, that’s where the \textit{rondas} caught those engineers \textit{ya}, because the mine also wants to enter through Llanguat, \textit{ya} and they caught them and brought the engineers to the House of the \textit{Rondero} \textit{ya} and they got a resolution out of those engineers. But first the engineers said, ‘I don’t know nothin, we don’t know nothin.’ And we said, ‘what do you mean you don’t know nothin when your boss’s signature is right here \textit{ya}?!’ They said we were slandering them, that they didn’t know nothin, and the person responsible was their boss, and that’s where we said to this engineer, ‘and can you bring your boss? Call him! Take the cell!’ And he called him and said, ‘come, come here, everything’s cool, bring all the documents, we’re in the Ministry of Agriculture, come.’ \textit{Puccha} and his boss came in a motor taxi \textit{ya} and very powerful \textit{von}, he was from Piura, very powerful and arrogant, he entered, he entered \textit{lisisimo}\textsuperscript{294}, entered eh, with a look, he was a tall guy, \textit{ya} and a \textit{señora rondera} said, ‘and he even enters like a spoiled brat,’ and as he started to insult the \textit{señora}, right there we disciplined him \textit{pue}, \textit{ya} for insulting a woman \textit{rondera}, \textit{ya} and so to start off the discipline, \textit{canguritos}, and this brat, he was supposed to do 100 little frog hops and at number 98 he stops and falls back and then he gave a smack \textit{von} to our disciplina Saulo, in the face and knocks him to the ground.”

\textit{LIC LIC}: “To Saulino?”

\textit{ATUQ}: “Aha, \textit{pucta} three more disciplinas surrounded him and beat him with the \textit{binza}, three \textit{fuetazos} on the back \textit{huevón}, PRA, PRA, PRA, and another disciplina went and hit him PRA on the ankles \textit{huevón, pucta}. He screamed, ‘ayayáu, ayayáu,’ \textit{pucta} he went kicking and skipping, he went back to his spot with pain \textit{carajo}, \textit{pucta} and began the debate \textit{pue}, \textit{pucta} and he was a brat. Again, push ups \textit{carajo}, and more \textit{carajo} for being a brat, everybody gets their discipline, physical exercises, because this opens their minds \textit{huevón}, this makes them more lucid, and as \textit{ya} their minds began to open, and they became lucid and recognized that they were at fault, that they were working for Conga, for Yanacocha and that they were turning their backs on the \textit{pueblo}, that’s when we gave them their coffee,
un cafecito with bread to warm up their motors. After they had their coffee, we taught them chants, each one had to memorized ten chants, and we said that they must lead the mobilization. It was twelve at night, more or less, one in the morning, and from the Rondera House we marched to the plaza de armas, but with them leading the chants ya, we went around the plaza de armas and there we made the boss of ALA climb up on the stage and give a speech about how he supports the fight, and that he is in agreement, jajajajaja and that the fight is just and that those of Yanacocha are doing things badly. It was approximately one in the morning and we made an agreement that the next day in the mobilization they would be ya with us, with their posters, and sure enough, they made good on their word, the next day all the engineers were with their posters in the mobilization, ya but the boss ya didn’t show himself. That week he quit and went to Piura. Ya.”

INTIMACY OUT OF PLACE

Not only is joking not a big topic academically, but in life too, we rarely give it its due, and yet joking is an activity which takes up a good part of our lives, albeit rising up from the cracks in consciousness, in whispers and off-moments, as it is explicitly not serious, nor suitable for work. But we do it all the time! It is what binds us to our most beloved, and yet rarely is it talked about or reflected on. Not much has changed since Freud wrote in his introduction to The Joke and Its Relation to the Unconscious, “our philosophical inquiries have not awarded to wit the important role that it plays in our mental life.” (633) Of course Nietzsche, Bataille and Bakhtin have all foregrounded the liberatory power of laughter, but their work continues to be obscure. How could so little attention be paid to such a fundamental part of experience? And what’s more, the best part, the part that rejuvenates, opens and loosens us up. As the poet Jean Paul writes, whom Freud cites: “Freedom begets wit and wit begets freedom.” In joking we once again taste that pleasure in ‘freed nonsense’, repressed since childhood by our educations and the power of reason. Freud tells us that absurdity can be a “restorer of old liberties” and “a relief from the pressure of intellectual upbringing.”295 Not restricted to conventional jokes with a set-up and a punch line, I envision jok-
ing as a free-form protean play which has no beginning and no end, but endlessly streams in metamorphic gaiety between friends, family and lovers: “Mutual agreeableness give rise to mutual bonds. Thus, there are bonds in jokes, in wit and in theatrical performances.”

I called myself the Anthropolyjest. For Freud, jests are a low form of humor. He calls jest the second stage of wit, the first stage being the play of children “with words and thoughts, motivated by certain pleasurable effects.” (29) The height of the jest is what Freud calls “tendency-wit” that is hostile or obscene jokes. For joking to become wit proper, it must satisfy two requirements: it must produce “pleasureful play” and guard that pleasure against the criticism of reason, or to put it another way, “the pleasure of wit arises from word-play or from the liberation of nonsense, and…the sense of wit is meant only to guard this pleasure against suppression through reason.” (33) This is the business of ‘wit-work’; “if it is not successful it is relegated to the category of ‘nonsense.’” (33) What distinguishes the jest from wit is simply that the jest need not be “valuable, new, or even good; it matters only that it can be expressed, even though what it may say is obsolete, superfluous, and useless.” (30) When the “utterance is substantial and valuable the jest changes into wit” (Jest and Wit, 34).

Freud would classify the majority of the jokes I learned in Cajamarca as jests. But my informants (what a nasty word!), my friends were not concerned with Freud’s distinctions. All they cared about was creating an atmosphere which thrived on continuous, perpetual play and joking. As Cesar Vallejo writes in Human Poems: “A man passes with bread under his arm. / Will I write afterwards of my double? / Another sits, scratches, extracts a flea from his armpit, kills it / Of what value is a discussion of psychoanalysis?” (246) Do we really need Freud to tell us why a joke is funny? Certainly not if he kills the joke, certainly not at the expense of laughing! But Freud knew this. In the case of obscene jokes he writes, “we are not capable of distinguishing by our
feelings which share of our pleasure has its source in technique, and which in tendency. *So we do not in the strict sense know what we are laughing at.*” (97)

I come up to a Peruvian man and ask him in Spanish, “Which is more correct to say? ‘Where is my food?’ or ‘Where could be my food?’ It doesn’t matter which one he chooses, cause either way I would point down toward my crotch and say, “Here is your food! Eat it!”

Another issue we must confront: many of these jokes are not funny outside of the context in which they were told. They are horrible in English, they fall flat, appear worse then juvenile. I am interested in this factor, the lack of humor an otherwise hilarious joke has when translated, because it creates a resistance to the pretense of absolute knowledge held by science, which includes anthropology and the social sciences. You can’t know everything, you have to experience it for yourself.

It took me many months before I could understand and repeat the jokes, and many more months to begin to find them funny. I remember thinking, at first, “I don’t get it. What’s so funny?” Though maybe it was just the sheer repetition that ingrained these jokes into my life, and the fact that I could cause an eruption of laughter at the drop of a hat. I was astounded by the sheer quantity of jokes, and I was always learning new ones to add to my ever expanding arsenal. Bruno is correct: jokes make powerful bonds and proved indispensable for getting on with people. Not that it was a strategy of mine, quite the opposite. I was witness to how the force of humor gives heart to the oppressed, inspiring a resistance movement, binding people together and making us ready to risk our lives, with a light heart.

One time I was reprimanded by Milton for yelling out an obscenity during a meeting of the Guardians at the Lagoon El Perol. This moment was significant because of the omnipresence of obscenity in the resistance movement. Dirty jokes, along with songs, chants, mythic stories and
prophetic dreams are the lifeblood of the peasant oral tradition, and particularly their culture of folk humor. It boggled my mind: we were obscenely joking all the time. And what’s more, I learned all these jokes from them! I didn’t talk that way before I got to Peru. But yet I was singled out for being obscene. In my embarrassment I struggled to explain what had happened. Where had I gone wrong? Then it occurred to me. It becomes obscenity proper when it is repressed. If the same joke occurs between good friends then it is called intimacy and it becomes attractive, drawing people together. But if that joke occurs in another context, outside the circle of intimacy, it becomes repulsive and obscene. Obscenity is intimacy out of place. There was nothing inherently wrong about what I said. Milton would participate in such humor if it were within the right context. His eyes were ever vigilant, knowing the political power of appearances in swaying mass sympathies. And he was already frustrated because people were leaving the meeting early. It was getting dark and people were tired. There had been endless discourses, predominantly from men. Máxima was the only woman given a chance to speak. There had been a break with music and dancing. Then the discourses started up again. People started to leave before it was finished. The leaders (Milton among them) were yelling, “come back!” “don’t leave!” “¡disciplina!” “¡compañeros!” At this moment Atuq whispered for me to shout our favorite cheer, so I waited for a lull in the speaker’s discourse and then yelled with all my might, “Viva la puga!!! Viva el pinch—” …and Milton smacked my arm, “Oye!! don’t say that!! What’s wrong with you?! You think this is a joke?! Next time you’re not coming!! There are religious people here!! You’ll offend them!!” I looked to Atuq for help but he was looking away, whistling, actively ignoring. Later, as we were walking back to the trucks, Atuq asked a profesora what she thought of my little stunt, “Did it bother you?”

“No, on the contrary, it made me happy that someone wanted to shout, ‘¡¡Viva!!’ It cheered up my pugita in this cold.”
I had other conflicts with Milton about similar issues. He once scolded me, “These are intimate things, you can’t publish intimate things— don’t fuck around.” He didn’t like me recording what everyone said and he even expressed worry that my work might reveal the *mistica* of the resistance to the enemy. Milton was concerned about organizing the masses, informing them of the technical destruction to be wrought by the mine. Intimacy (or obscenity) was not part of his revolution. Atuq represented another, more anarchic form of leadership. While Milton would be up front, center stage, giving his discourse to the masses, Atuq would be in the back, whispering jokes in the shadows. Atuq knew the importance of disorganization and spontaneity. When he told me to yell, “Long live the pussy! Long live the dick! And Conga No Va damn it!” we both knew in our hearts that any revolution worthy of the name must include a revolution of experience as well. That cry is the true title of my dissertation. It was Atuq’s idea.

Let’s face it: the campesinos are shit to the dominant culture. They’re perceived as obscene, backward, stupid, dirty, lazy, superstitious, inhibiting the progress of Peru. Atuq told me that you know the *coca* leaves are beginning to divine when they taste like cow shit. To revalue this obscenity as intimacy, to proclaim the dignity of peasant culture, precisely because of its proximity to the *base*, this for me is the heart of the resistance movement and the battlefield upon which the shadow war of ideology and mythology is fought.

**CULTURE BY WAY OF THE BOTTOM**

there is a bone, / where / **god** / sat down on the poet, / in order to sack the ingestion / of his lines, / like the head farts / that he wheedles out of him through his cunt, / that he would wheedle out of him from the bottom of the ages, / down to the bottom of his cunt hole, / and it’s not a cunt prank / that he plays on him in this way, / it’s the prank of the whole earth / against whoever has balls / in his cunt. / And if you don’t get the image, — and that’s what I hear you saying / in a circle, / that you don’t get the image / which is at the bottom / of my cunt hole, — / it’s because you don’t know the bottom, / not of things, / but of my cunt, / mine, / although since the
bottom of the ages / you’ll all be lapping there in a circle / as if badmouthing an alienage, / plotting an incarceration to death. (“Artaud le Momo” in Watchfiends & Rack Screams, p. 99-101)

Now I am sure you think this sounds like madness, and in a way it is, but as Nietzsche said, there is always some method in madness. Artaud’s imagery is actually in line with his major theme: “Artaud le Momo”. The title is appropriate if we consider the carnivalesque reversals present in the text: the lines of poetry that are like head farts, for example, are uncrownings, sullyling the upper register by contact with the lower. Or consider what Bakhtin called “the mighty thrust downward”, as god wheedles out these head farts, “from the bottom of the ages”, and if that thrust downward wasn’t clear enough for you, Artaud continues to repeat “down to the bottom of his cunt hole.” This is further complicated by the gender reversals of the poet, and whoever else, “has balls / in his cunt.” Like Carnaval, which is a feast for all the world, these debasements are not just one individual’s “cunt prank” but “the prank of the whole earth”, committed by god against the poet. We might say of the campesinos’ obscene jokes what Artaud says a little later in his Momo text: “maelstrom upon maelstrom of depth (of culture by way of the bottom).” (147) The campesinos are bound to the Mother Earth, Pacha Mama. Theirs is a culture by way of the bottom.
7. STATES OF EMERGENCY

Figure 7.1
At night the sidewalks are lined with candles in plastic bottles cut into the shapes of flowers. The streets are so wide and flat that you can see the candles glowing all the way down—like long, dark roads of stars. People stand in their windows and doorways clanging pots and pans, and blasting protest music out of speakers... polyphony ringing out over the city... these are other forms of protest, since a state of emergency was declared and people can not protest in the streets. Cops everywhere milling about. Amazing to be here and walk the streets and listen. Exchanging smiles.

This is an extract from a letter I wrote after my first night in Celendín during one of the states of emergency. I was bowled over by the exuberance of the pueblo in the face of death. That was the moment when I realized there were other ways to fight, when these other forms of protest dawned on me. Knowing that it was in honor of the dead, the martyrs of water, as the people call them, and the threat of environmental end times, it all created a constellation in my psyche: these are spiritual forms of protest. They release a spiritual force because they get into you and make you feel something.

I remember seeing the military march in formation down the streets during the 8 month occupation of Celendín, doing their practicas de guerra and pointing their weapons at children who stood silent and terrified in the shadow of their doorways. Imagine walking into a restaurant and seeing nothing but camouflage, every seat filled with militares, who ironically all have their heads up, watching the T.V. bolted into the corner.

An old lady, Ofelia Degados Rodriguez, selling potatoes as a squad of soldiers marches down the street with rifles. One soldier whistles happily. Unafraid, standing in the middle of the street, pausing to sell papas, breasts sagging, gold-framed teeth glittering, one rotted out in the back, twinkling eyes. Moto taxis raced by as she told me how the Earth had recently swallowed up a mine machine. And the miners were offering human sacrifices to the Lagoons in order to be permitted to take out the gold! “Has to be respected pue,” Pacha Mama and her hunger.
There was a buzz around town. Radios blaring from windows. I ask a man in the doorway if there is a strike. “No, because of the state of emergency, we can’t be in the streets. With radios, that’s it.” A woman in a restaurant tells me the mine is paralyzed for 10 years until there is a new president… cause Ollanta is a liar. I know that’s not technically true, Conga has only been suspended for 2 years, but I let her finish her story: “He asked the people, ‘what is more important, water or gold?’ and everybody yelled out, ‘WATER!’ and he said ‘because you don’t drink gold, you don’t eat gold, do you?’” How many times did I hear that story? Dazed and baffled I wander in and out of the market, trying to piece together what was happening. A guy in a taxi tells me, “We are fighting for water… nothing more.”

There were rumors of the police washing their clothes and even urinating and defecating in the city’s water supply. Whether true or not, such phantasies are expressions of the profound sense of disgrace which people felt. Others showed me where the military had painted Sendero Luminoso graffiti around Celendín in order to then accuse the population of terrorism. Abuse of underage girls was a regular occurrence leaving at least ten minors as single mothers. The Rondas Campesinas proudly told me that they had captured these malcriados and judged them in a meeting according to the usos y costumbres of the Ronda.

**TIMELINE**

March 31st, 2010— Yanacocha presents the EIA in a public audience.

November 24th-29th, 2011— Peasants occupy the Conga goldmine and are shot by police. In response, the populations of Celendín, Huasmin and Sorochuco burn the mining offices.

December 4th, 2011— President Humala declares a 60 day state of emergency in the region of Cajamarca.

July 3rd, 2012— Four people killed by the police in Celendín.
July 4th, 2012— 1 person killed by the police in Bambamarca.

July 5th, 2012— President Humala declares a 30 day state of emergency in the provinces of Cajamarca, Bambamarca and Celendín. This state of emergency was then extended at the beginning of August for another 30 days.

August 28th, 2012— Peruvian Prime Minister Juan Jimenez announces the government’s decision to order the suspension of the Conga mine project.

STATES OF EMERGENCY:

In 2009, the Conga mega-project looked like it would be a sure success. It was supported by the majority of the population. During almost 10 years of intervention, Yanacocha had generated a social fracture in Celendín. The principle organizations of Celendín, like SUTEP, were controlled by Yanacocha. The Rondas Campesinas were divided and both organizations were at the service of the mine. There was distrust because the mine had been known to bribe municipality authorities. The mayor himself was a miner. Yanacocha spread a big publicity in radios, television and print offering a series of gifts and projects to the population. One of these that they broadcasted every 15 minutes on every radio said at the end: “With good mining above, more water below…”. The authorities never called the population to inform about the benefits and the impacts of the mining project. So a small group of members of the political party Tierra y Libertad got together to organize an event about mining in the province of Celendín. They asked Milton Sanchez to help. At that time Milton worked as the Executive Secretary in the Association of Municipalities of the Andean Marañón (AMMA). He had no prior experience as an activist, but it seemed important to have an event where they inform the population about the Conga project and its impacts. In the coming years Milton would become the figure-head of the resistance in Celendín. He recommended that they don’t do the event as a political party because the campesinos are notoriously suspicious of politiqueros and that they don’t charge an admission fee, rather that they do a
public forum in which local organizations are involved. They called the Communal Agents of Health, the students and teachers of the Professional Academic School of Environmental Engineering, the head office of the National University of Cajamarca, and the network of youths Interquorum, among others.

“We invited about 12 organizations to this first event. It seemed important to invite the Table of Consultation for the Fight against Poverty. We invited the mining company but they never showed up… Later we learned that the foundation Los Andes de Cajamarca, NGO of Yanacocha, had offered masters degrees, diplomas, etc. to some members of the Table of Consultation, so we stopped working with them. With the organizations that we had joined together we decided to have a second event on the 12th of February, 2010 ya without the participation of the Table. The forum was called ‘Celendín, Mining or Sustainable Development,’ which was attended by about 400 people. In the forum they presented the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), the investigations of the impact of the 18 years of mining with Yanacocha in Cajamarca and the ecological and economic zoning of the region that had been done. We also showed the images of lagoons and wetlands that would be impacted by Conga.”

In this way the Plataforma Interinstitucional Celendina (PIC) arose, a group of organizations that were concerned with the protection of the environment and the integrity of the pueblo. “We agreed to continue forward together promoting a space where the population can inform themselves about the Conga mining project.”

On the 31st of March, 2010 Yanacocha presented the EIA in a public audience held in the province of Cajamarca, despite the fact that more than 90% of the project is located in the province of Celendín. Strategically they did it in San Nicolás, district of Encañada, with more than 700 DINOES present for the purposes of intimidation. They brought people from Encañada promising them that they would be the new businessmen of Conga. They brought them in freight trucks, pickup trucks, buses, combis. The majority were workers of Yanacocha accompanied by their families, that was the mandate of the senior management of the company. The majority of inhabitants
from Huasmin, Sorochuco and Bambamarca never heard about the public audience, “the few that did could not participate pues their communities are 7 to 8 hours away.”

Atuq was there. He told me:

“What a scandal! It made me so angry! They invited us to a public audience, puta and for the first time in my life, [I saw] so many soldiers on the hills, as if they were bringing us to a war. There had been more than 1000 or 1500 soldiers, every 3 meters, puta soldiers pointing at you huevón [with their guns], so that you enter a public audience that they invited you to! puta and with soldiers! ¡que no sean pendejos! [don’t be assholes!]… this made me so angry that when I had the opportunity to speak, brother, I spoke… I spoke there. I can not forget this, this part huevón, so many things have happened but this part at San Nicolás… puta it’s as if they had brought us to a war, to confront the soldiers, man, that made me very angry ya.”

The P.I.C. decided to call the first interprovincial meeting of Defense Fronts in the province of Celendín, in November of 2010. The month before, the EIA of Conga had been approved in record time. The engineer Felipe Ramírez del Pino, ex manager of Yanacocha, who suspiciously passed over to work for the MINEM [Ministry of Energy and Mining], approved the EIA. At this event there were leaders from Cajamarca, Bambamarca, San Marcos and San Pablo. The leaders were impressed when they learned the magnitude and the consequences of this mining project. The second interprovincial meeting took place in the province of San Marcos, in June, 2011.

After this second meeting people decided to solicit an audience with Gregorio Santos Guerrero, who for six months had assumed functions as Regional President of Cajamarca and had not taken a stand on the Conga project, to the contrary he had come in the month of February to the province of Celendín to receive a budget from the mining company for the construction of a new market in Celendín. As Milton said, “We didn’t have much confidence in Goyo, also because César Aliaga, Vice-president of Goyo to this day has a brother working as a manager in the Conga project. They denied us twice. In the third document that we sent, we expressed that we would go directly to Goyo to talk. They made us wait in the auditorium. Vice-president César Aliaga came
out saying that Gregorio Santos was in Chota and that he would tend to us instead. We said that we didn’t want to talk with him and that it was the third time that the president snubbed us. He left the auditorium annoyed, gathering his papers, when 80 leaders from 5 provinces began chanting, “El agua no se vende, el agua se defiende” [Don’t sell water, defend water].” Only when the people threatened to occupy the Regional Government did Goyo magically appear.

On the 29th of November 2011, unarmed peasants occupied the Conga goldmine and were shot by police. Over 20 protestors were wounded. The government has denied that bullets were fired. Atuq told me:

“In 2011 we moved ourselves to the lagoons so that, from there, the bases, our ronderos, we say to the world, we say to the government of Ollanta Humala, to Newmon that we don’t want them to dry up our lagoons, that we don’t want their reservoirs that they want to make in our headwaters, that they let us live as we are, and bueno it was last year that thousands of us positioned ourselves up in the high part of Sorochuco, of Huasmín and from there we organized ourselves and we said, ‘we’re going to be here in our lagoons as Guardians of the Lagoons, until the national and international media let the world know that our fountains of water, our lagoons and our rivers are threatened by a few insolent bastards that want to come from other countries and also here, Roque Benavidas, who is Peruvian, wants to dry up our lagoons and make reservoirs! We were not going to permit it and we are never going to permit it, because we are conscious that the lagoons are natural and their reservoirs! Artificial reservoirs! Compared with the human body, our heart, no matter how abused it may be, an artificial heart will never ever be equal to it, so with this comparison we are saying to the insolent bastards of Newmon that we don’t want mining exploitation in our headwaters, we see ourselves as obligated to go and protect our lagoons, to protect our rivers, because from there our rivers are born that go to Llaguat, that go until the Marañón…”

I had lunch with Nilton and Chuqui, two young men who were students at the School of Environmental Engineering. Nilton was up at the Lagoons on the 24th of November working as a reporter. He went in a private van (all the campesinos went in freight trucks). He told me someone had set a trap for them, “the van passed over a hole and our tire popped no? I say a trap because the nails that were in that hole were new, they were not rusted or ya old no? which they would be if they had fallen there by accident.” When they finally got up, they met with other students of
Environmental Engineering and the *Rondas Campesinas*. There was a meeting and a *olla común*, everybody ate. That night the *Rondas* organized themselves in groups to make rounds, and Nilton went along. He saw the little tents made of plastic tarps and branches, the sleeping bags, because it’s cold up there. “Afterward we had our *cafecito* with our bread, with our *pancito*, and it was really lovely. Those moments are unique no? because it’s everybody in a great mass. I saw that organization of the *bien común* you could say no? of the *bien común* as a principle, in which you worry for the other person no? You don’t only worry for your own self but for the other person.” Everyone went to sleep. The plan was to advance their camp up to Conga in the morning. The *campesinos* always get up real early. 4 or 5 in the morning, they’re up. They were about 1000 people, from all over the surrounding communities. Even the mayors of Huaszmín and Sorochuco were present. They led the people to march. Forward! Forward! But Nilton and the other students slept in. He crawled out of his tent at 7am. There was *un solazo*, he remembers, an intensely bright sun. He recalled how a *rondera* almost beat him with a stick when he called to his friend by her nickname, “Keiko!” cause that is also the name of the daughter of Alberto Fujimori, so the *rondera* thought, “this guy’s a Fujimorista!” He jumped back in his tent and right at that moment *campesinos* came running down the road. They were screaming something but were too far away. As the *campesinos* approached, all the sudden everybody understood: “They were asking for help. We all grabbed our sticks, our rocks and we went up, nobody choked, everybody went up, *bueno* one or two that were afraid stayed back.” They had vinegar for when the teargas bombs began to fall. You put a wet rag to your nose so that you don’t suffocate too much: “We went up with that will, with that courage, with that conviction to defend what is ours, the water, which is something important. If we don’t defend what little remains, I don’t know what will become of us. We’ll only have our tears to drink.” The confrontation erupted. He counted something like 70 *tombos*. Nilton told me
only 10% or maybe 20% of the campesinos were face to face with the police. The rest of the comrades stayed back and cheered from the curve of the road: “They were cowardly, letting us face the police. Pues we weren’t scared. We started our chants, ‘My life, my blood, everything for water!’ With these chants we strengthen ourselves in order to confront the police.” Nilton commended the campesinas, women of the countryside, who carried the buckets of water for the tear-gas bombs, “because, you know, when the gas reaches you, it drowns you, it makes you faint no? We felt a great joy seeing the women that ran from here to there with their buckets of water to counteract the teargas. We didn’t have anything besides our vinegar. We didn’t have weapons no? So there were wounded.” A lawyer was wounded in the leg and despite that, he didn’t want to retreat. There was a comrade from the university who was hit in the face by a teargas bomb. The left side of his face was completely destroyed. Marino Castañeda was wounded in the eye. Elmer Campos was shot in the spine. He lost a kidney and his spleen, and suffered a spinal cord injury which paralyzed him from the waist down. Nilton remembered, “I saw that people were shooting at us from up on the mountain. Many comrades were wounded by pellets, some in the hip, some in the legs. There are many people now in bed no? that can’t even stand up or move.” A teargas bomb hit Nilton’s foot, luckily he had his shoes on. It threw him to one side. He had the sensation that he would drown. Comrades came to resuscitate him: “when they hurt or wound you that’s when you are given more courage no? to continue forward, to continue fighting against the police, to overthrow the police. Bueno, there was so much blood. We never imagined that this was going to happen.” They ran back to their camp with pellets whizzing past their ears. His friends threw themselves to the ground or off the edge of the road to avoid being hit: “cowardly the police continued shooting and you would see how the people fell, they fell down no? and nobody, not even
myself, was able to go back and help these people up.” People threw themselves down the last hill and rolled to the camp, to not be wounded.

Later when everyone was back at the camp, a dialogue was opened between the Colonel on one side, and two nuns and the mayor of Sorochuco on the other: “and in that moment, when we’re all peaceful ya, two shots were heard no? The tombos had shot at the sisters! Thank God it fell very close but nobody was wounded… and at that instant a mudito299 burst the eye of a policeman with his jebe300 and bueno he was very happy about that.” Nilton told me that it was a relief: “at least one of us did it, bueno es pues, bueno es, bueno.” The mudito was very happy, jumping with joy, “he kissed us, he hugged us, he said, ‘mmmmmmm’, we couldn’t understand him until we saw it pues the policeman had fallen, blood on his face.”

Afterwards, Nilton’s car helped collect the wounded: “we went down like this no? up and down, up and down.” The next day they were again supposed to help but about half way they ran out of gas and were stuck in the middle of the road. Thankfully they were close to a house which gave them lodging and a little food: “comrades of the lucha pues.”

One man’s story of November was horrifying. As we walked home in the rain after a protest in Cajamarca, he told me:

“We as farmers are trying to defend our waters because we know that water is life and life is non-negotiable. So on November 24th we went on foot to fight for life once and for all. November 25th, I’m there at the lagoons, at Lagoon Mishacocha, right on the road that goes from Cajamarca to Santa Rosa. The police started attacking, beating people, taking advantage that they had weapons, pellet guns and other things that the State provides them with, but they’re supposed to use these weapons to deal with criminals, not people like us who are just trying to defend life. The police took me… they arrested me. An unlawful arrest: practically kidnapping me in the midst of my people. Even though the police had attacked us, they still took me prisoner. They beat me until I was unconscious, completely battered me: they kicked every square inch of my body. They even rammed a rifle in my mouth, threatening to kill me. I regained consciousness and was driven to Cajamarca; first to the police station, where they wanted me to sign a blank statement. Their intentions were obvious: to make me sign the statement and then fill in the
offense at their convenience. And why?! I didn’t bring any kind of blade or firearm but I found bullets in my pocket. So I signed this statement knowing to God that they had put them on me, they had put drugs and bullets on me. They made me sign this arrest sheet to say that I had been carrying a weapon. But it wasn’t like that and even now I’m still trying to recover. Bit by bit as time goes by I’m starting to recover. But this abuse of the police, those cowards of police officers have gone mad with power. An abusive power. But I’m not scared of them; I will be first in line to reclaim the rights of the population; rights that are threatened absolutely. And now we’re ready to say ‘enough’ of all this abuse. Enough of this outrage. Enough of everything. They detained me for about twelve hours, thanks to the people who fought for my freedom. Because with their evil intentions, making me sign that statement and other tactics, I would have served ten years or more for something I didn’t do. It’s all so unjust. Simply for defending life, for defending water, for defending our rights, and to guarantee the quality of life for my children, my grandchildren and also my people and future generations. It’s unjust, and it isn’t fair for the people who have to go on living in this area of the country. They framed me and then brought me with my hands and feet tied up, beaten. All cowardly, a cowardly act of the police, the DINOES. From the beatings and mistreatment I was left unconscious… there in the Conga project. When I woke up I realized I was wrapped up in plastic. Covered in plastic, on display for all my people who had been beaten up. They displayed me to my people to say this is what happens if you complain, but they had covered me in plastic with stones on top…”

LIC LIC: “Almost as though you were dead…”
MAN: “Yes, that’s what I thought.”

Chuqui told me that the police attacks were very terrible for the people down in the city of Celendín who listened on their radios as the confrontation was transmitted live, “like a soccer match, or that is yo, ‘the police are coming down,’ ‘the people are on the other side of the hill.’” Then it was reported that there were two deaths, which wasn’t true, but it didn’t matter. The population of Celendín rioted and burned the offices of Conga and Galeno, “bueno they destroyed the offices, they burned everything. The same day, they also burned the offices in Huasmin and Soro-ochuco.”

The people met in the plaza de armas and marched through the streets. Then they came to the office of Conga. It was guarded by police, but not that many, maybe 10 or 15, the rest were up
above at the lagoons, “we said, our campesino brothers are dying up above, we have to do something, so we proposed to everybody that we go burn the office of Conga. Many people said, no, no, no don’t do that, we don’t want to fall in provocation. But we were able to pass the police barrier and in the end we began to destroy the doors, the windows, everything.” There were two entrances to the office, one on La Pardo and an other on La Cáceres. They broke down the doors on La Pardo and “we took everything outside, all the computers, televisions, we just broke everything.” They took out the mattresses and set them aside to be sent up to the Guardians. Everything else they burned. They left it totally destroyed, “not even one lightbulb was left, like this, smashed all the lightbulbs paaa, windows paaa, stones everywhere, they even opened all the faucets and flooded everything inside. All the windows, the glass, even took the wood of the doors. They left the place empty. They burned everything, even documents. There were many, many documents there. Everything outside and ya fire.” The police came and wanted to stop them but they couldn’t because just then another mass of people came down la Cáceres. The police retreated, “they took off and no, they said nothing to us,” But the people didn’t stop there, they went to the office of Lumina Copper, another mining company. “Let’s go!” They found many rocks because a road was being made down that way, “ya we each grabbed a stone.” When they arrived they realized that somebody was filming from the second floor. It was the guard of the office, “so with piedrazos we made him come down, yup the people were infuriated pue.” The door was made of metal, a really strong one on rollers: “with pure stone, big stones pue, we broke down this door. Once we passed inside we did the same. There was a big plasma television. Between us all we grabbed it and pa we took it down to the floor, PUM, everything to the ground, just like that, all their documents.” The guachimán had hidden himself in the kitchen and the people wanted to pull him out with all his documentation: “and that he show us the video that he was recording! so he took it out, we
took away the camera, we took out the memory and *ya* we didn’t return it to him, because he was recording what happened. There was a person apart from us and I believe that he helped the guard so that he could escape, isn’t it true? He was able to escape out the other side. We continued the same. So once they destroyed everything there, we began to walk up here to the *plaza de armas*, and it was quite a day for people here. It was a historic day for Celendín.”

They loved to tell these stories. Moments of pride, moments when a sense of dignity returned. Minor victories, perhaps, but still victories, and they give the people the will to continue fighting. People told these stories with relish, night after night, chewing coca, taking swigs of *cañazo*, wondering if they’d still be alive tomorrow, if the fate of their families and future generations and the Earth itself would be decided.
I was with them up in the highlands for the one year anniversary, November 24th 2012. The plan had been for the Guardians of the Bambamarca camp to cross over to the Celendín camp and then to have a big meeting and celebration together. I was with the Bambachos. After dancing to the *bandas tipicas*, we set off down the muddy hill from the camp and all piled into the waiting vans and buses. We’re not driving for 5 minutes when we hit a police roadblock. They won’t let the vehicles pass. There is a tense moment when all the people pile out and are face to face with a wall of police. Then suddenly the people turn and begin hiking straight up the side of the mountain. The police watch stunned for a moment and then follow us. The people scattered into small groups, some going up along the ridge, some going down through the valley, some getting stranded on a
sudden ledge. I spent the next few hours watching from a crag with a group of people, including Edy Benevidas and Idelson Hernandez who tried their best to coordinate via cellphone as the police steadily closed in, blocking the way, making it impossible for our people to cross over to the Celendín camp. Then we heard gun shots echo across the mountains. As twilight approached, we saw a small group of black specks stuck in the marshy valley of Jadibamba river, trying to cross. Luckily the Shilicos from the Celendín camp swooped down on horses and rescued them. Out of a few hundred people who started out from the Bambamarca camp, only 7 people made it to the Celendín camp.

“We succeeded in passing to the other side pue and happily, but making a thousand efforts no? We arrived over there to the comrades of Celendín at 6:30, 7 at night, we arrived all exhausted, a shame indeed. We passed the Jadibamba river, we passed all that distance, we sure fought a lot with the police. That is, they blocked us pue, they don’t want us to meet up with the other comrades no? They shot bullets puccha they burst through the tips of the ponchos, ya at the last cross that we made ya it was woeful, there they attacked a small group of us, the police pue, they could detain us, they could kidnapped us.”

On the 4th of December, 2011, President Humala declared a 60 day state of emergency in the region of Cajamarca. The measure suspends civil liberties such as the right to assembly and allows arrests without warrants. Thousands of police and military forces were dispatched to the area.

\textit{El estado de emergencia no tiene valides}
\textit{Ollanta y Valdes la misma cojudes!}

The state of emergency is not valid
Ollanta and Valdes\textsuperscript{301}, the same bullshit!

On the 31st of May, 2012, the provinces of Cajamarca, Hualgayoc, Celendín, San Pablo, San Marcos and others initiated the Second Indefinite Regional Strike against the Conga mega
On the first day of the strike, the government of Ollanta Humala unleashed a violent repression in the plazuela Bolognesi of Cajamarca. Police attacked the women who were preparing the olla común for the thousands of campesinos that participated in the mobilizations. They arrested and beat the señorita Lizeth Vásquez Vásquez and a leader of the rondas urbanas José Rojas Carrera (who, they stripped, beat and threw into their vehicle) and also a reporter of a local television channel. They kicked over the pots of food and launched tear gas bombs at the people. Obviously this was done to break the strike and so that the campesinos arriving to Cajamarca would not have food to eat.

The book by GRUFIDES entitled Mercenary Police at the Service of Mining Companies immortalizes the moment when the police kicked over the pots of food with a drawing in the style of Guaman Poma’s The First New Chronicle and Good Government, except at the top of this drawing it reads, “Bad Government / Kicks their Pots: the police [kick] a señora that together with others prepares food for the Shilicos that defend the lagoons of Caxamarca, the eternal betrayal.” There is an image of two police kicking over the olla común and beating a crying peasant woman with their batons. “Distinguished Boss, why do you hit me?” she pleads. “Because you’re dogs pe’, concha tu mare!” On the police are written ironic statements, “courageous police say to the fighters of Cajamarca: ‘Die of hunger, because you do not have the right to eat well’”, and the other, beginning on his helmet, “the helmet protects the police against ‘subversive’ ideas … like ‘solidarity’ for example.” On the pot, spilling it’s broth and potatoes on the street, is written with biting wit, “Perú País Gastronómico” [Peru, Gourmet Country] mocking the promotion of tourism in Peru. The portrayal in imitation of Guaman Poma’s drawings enshrines this moment in a form instantly recognizable to many Peruvians. As a continuation of the history of treachery, betrayal and broken hearts, it casts this moment into collective memory as yet one more outrage in the
centuries of oppression, becoming another cry for the coming of the Andean Utopia, or what Atuq called, “the revolution of the world.”
On July 5th, 2012, a second state of emergency was declared in the provinces of Cajamarca, Bambamarca and Celendín after the police killed five people: four in Celendín on the 3rd of July, 2012 and another in Bambamarca on the following day, July 4th, 2012. The police also left 21 people injured. In Celendín, July 3rd is known as “The Day of Dignity and Resistance”.

These events were preceded by 35 days of protest. Atuq played a central role in their organization. He emphasized that the mobilizations were peaceful. People made “their little posters, inspiring our campesinos, our ronderos, with their very wise phrases with love for Nature, with love for the water, with love for the environment, with love for the little birds, with love for everything.” It was the first time, he said, that the country and the city of Celendín joined together, “the first time we were defending our aquifers as one single man, peacefully, with lots of culture.” At night they held vigils. Every neighborhood and organization gathered in the plaza de armas where they’d cook hot chocolate, cedrón, cinnamon and maybe a panizara with bread. “We’d gather all our brothers to watch a few videos about how they should defend the environment, for example in la Oroya, in Cerro de Pasco, in Hualgayoc, in almost every place in Perú where there has been mining now there is a sadness, a tremendous silence, ya there are none of those little birds, ya none of those frogs that are connected with Nature, ya the sun ya doesn’t shine as it shines in our Celendín.” Atuq, Milton and the members of the P.I.C. would explain the technical aspect of mining, but then a moment came when their campesino brothers and sisters also participated with their art, “singing some songs to Nature, making some poems, so our vigils converted into an artistic vigil, yes, where our brothers were greatly inspired to make their songs, make their poetry, where children, youths and adults participated.” Atuq told me with pride how the people came to expect the protests each day, “our brothers ya knew.” They’d be in the market from 5am until 11am, as is their custom, selling their products and buying everything they needed to make lunch,
“but ya from ll on we were gathering in the plaza de armas and also in the casa del maestro in order to make our mobilizations, it was a fiesta, a fiesta that never in my life have I seen in any other part of the country, in any part of our provinces, but they were giving it here in Celendín.”

There were 35 days of mobilizations, 35 nights of vigils: “Much art, consciousness, music, dance, poetry and we had [money] for two more months of vigils ya noted down, the donations,” but then the 3rd of July came, “and pucta nos sacaron la mierda di? [they beat the shit out of us].”

Atuq was readying the speakers at 10 in the morning when the sub-secretary of the P.I.C., Professor Ramón, who was also the general secretary of SUTEP, came running and shouting, “There are infiltrators! Infiltrators are going to make disorder and please we have to organize ourselves and stop all this!” But it was too late because the infiltrators had arrived at the plaza de armas.

Señora Santos, the mother of one of the martyrs of water, said the infiltrators were “all Mauro’s people.” They were told, “Go ahead an’ go out with sticks with rocks, break whatever ya’ll find in ya’ll’s way!” They smashed cars, motorcycles, “everythin’ they found they’d broke.” Then they went to the municipality and broke down the door with a crowbar, “broke down the doors an’ set it on fire. They’d set fire to the government office, set fire to everythin’, the whole Council they’d gone an’ set fire to it so then why they sayin’ that we’d done it, but we didn’t do nothin’!” Señora Santos said the police had made an agreement with the mayor, “so four policemen set up there at the Council door… they just looked over and that’s it and what was there? The guy breakin’ the door. They’d acted like they ain’t see nothin’ but they sure did saw.” She says the infiltrators acted this way “to send us into a state of emergency quick so we’d make peace.”

Atuq continued narrating:

“the masses, and the young people of Celendín ya no, they couldn’t control them. They began to chant until there came a moment when the police, the army that was here in Celendín began to shoot pellet guns at our people, our brothers of
Celendín. Young people had rocks from where they were changing the sewage pipes in the plaza de armas. They began to defend themselves with some stones, but a moment came when the police began to throw teargas bombs and pellets, bombs and pellets. There was a tremendous smoke in the plaza de armas and our brothers began to grab fireworks, rockets and with those they defended themselves. After that two helicopters arrived and immediately they shot. They killed three of our comrades. There were many wounded and an other comrade died in Cajamarca. There we have 4 dead comrades.”

“Yes, it was incredible to see all this… this labyrinth of rockets, of stones, of bombs, of pellets and I believe also long distance bullets, ehhh…” We were speaking with Father Del Mar, one of the local priests who was present on July 3rd. “I went in this labyrinth to speak with the police and with the brothers so that they retreat but we didn’t manage to stop it… we could not prevent these deaths no? I went to speak with the police, the army and they told me, ‘do you see what your brothers are doing?… tell them to go or something else is going to happen,’ and it was true, something else happened no? the three deaths, the three brothers that in reality should not have died in that way… that’s where I felt a little useless because I could do nothing.” But in fact, Father Del Mar did do something extremely heroic. He opened up the church for people to hide. More than a hundred people took refuge. Señora Santos told me, “thank God the church was open ‘cause if it was closed we woulda been a buncha dead men and when we were inside there, behind the bars we seen them comin’ ooooooooh the policemen, the cops shootin’ everywhere like cancha, like cancha they was shootin’. The little kids picked up the bullets por milcas like this and they’d threwed it in the river.” She said the people jammed the pews up against the doors cause the police “was goin’ pum pum pum pum!!! They wanted to break down the door of the church. An’ it was bullets all around like cancha like cancha, so they wanted to get in to kill us.” Father del Mar said, “we could not, I at least could not keep them from entering the church. Not even because it was a sacred place… could they respect it. You can see me there in a photo where I am telling them to calm down, telling them, ‘please, you can not enter,’ but they entered by force.
They kicked the door, they broke the locks, they entered, they wanted to throw bombs at the church and shoot inside, there would have been more deaths. They beat the secretary of the Parish, they beat me also and the truth is that it has been very difficult and very traumatic, so I can be a witness, like Atuq, of this confrontation and what I feel is injustice for all that they have done.”

Señora Santos was inside the church for about half an hour when her daughter got a call on her cellphone. She said to her daughter, “Who’s callin’ ya?” Her granddaughter had called her daughter, “Mamá, my uncle Joselito was shot an’s at the clinic.”

“An’ so then a couple a minutes later they’d called us again sayin’ that they’d brung ‘im to Cajamarca, and he’s emm real bad ‘cause the bullet’d hit ‘im in the mouth, it was... it’s I’m tellin’ ya it’s a total shame, this pain’s got me forever til’ the day I die, I’d never thought I’d lose my boy like that. Woulda been better if they’d killed him there an’ then like the others died and I hadn’t seen him like that, ‘cause ‘is mouth was all open with ‘is tongue all stickin’ out like that picture, I’s seen ‘im on the television that the lawyer’s watchin’ for me, a total shame, you know that a mother for ‘er child feels so much and I cry every time.”

She said they found his teeth in his stomach.

The youngest of the people killed that day was 16 year old Cesar Medina Aguilar. He was shot in the head from a helicopter.

Cesar was just finishing high school. Atuq called him “jovencito... a very intelligent boy, he was a leader of the institute Pedro Pablo Augusto Gil." Atuq said Cesar was leaving an internet cafe when it happened. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time. Cesar was taking photographs of the disturbance when the police took away his cellphone and broke it. He was upset but Atuq said, “Don’t worry brother, it’s only your cellphone” and just then the helicopters arrived. People began to run but Atuq grabbed the flag of Celendín and yelled, “Don’t run! Don’t give up brothers!” The people heartened and made another charge at the police. Atuq gave a look over his shoulder and he saw Cesar was laying on the ground with a pool of blood by his head. Atuq was reluctant to tell this story because he felt responsible and ashamed.
Cesar’s mother, Maximila Aguilar Vásquez, said Cesar left early for the Internet with his backpack on his shoulder and his notebook. She said to him, “Ya little son, come back fast. Don’t go to the protest because something’s going to happen, they’re screaming over there.” Cesar told her, “Don’t worry mamá, I’m only with God. He knows if ya something’s going to happen. So don’t worry mamá. I’ll be right back.” She went to leave her other children downstairs and then made lunch. She was waiting for him to get back, saying to herself, “ya he’s coming, ya he’s coming.” The street started to fill up with police. She heard shots. That’s when she went like a mad woman to look for him. At first the police wouldn’t let her leave but she screamed, “Kill me! I’m going to look for my son!” She went straight to the hospital because her heart had a premonition that she would find him there. “Like this, something entered my heart: ‘my son is in the hospital.’ I went to the hospital without anybody telling me and I found my son there, laid out on a bed. He was still a little warm. But the hospital staff wouldn’t tend to him. They preferred to save the soldiers, save the police, the killers, rather than save a child that still wanted to live. He was alive for two more hours but they didn’t save him, they let my innocent son die.” Then Maximila changed her tone: “This damned mayor is to blame! There is no justice here, like this they kill us. There is no justice, not of the people nor of the courts. The police, worse. They mock us, they go around laughing. They want to enter, kill us and that’s it. They’re calm and happy.”

Father del Mar said there was a “total resentment for the police.” Then he added, “but obviously they were sent by someone no? ehhh I feel a lot of pain for them also, because many times they aren’t to blame but they should have controlled themselves here in the pueblo that has fed them, not like in Bambamarca where they denied them water, they denied them everything, there yes they made them suffer, but here in Celendín we gave them whatever they needed, right?” He then told how even he lent them his services. After the army had beaten him, he went to give
them a liturgy, “to speak with them about the word of God and at one point I said to them that those who had beaten me were present there, and not only me, but all those that were detained, taken without documents, had their belongings taken away, their cloths taken away, so I believe that it has been very hard, a very sad experience, because we have been witnesses to that which should not have happened here, and truthfully I call those people that are responsible to recognize their guilt, I invoke them, I implore the people that gave the orders, that are the heads of the army and of politics, and he that is in charge now is Ollanta Humala.”

Atuq agreed with Father del Mar. He said that when the army and police arrived in Celendín, “we considered them like our brothers. The brothers of the army are also brothers, children of campesinos. The police are children of campesinos like us, of the pueblo.” It turns out that before all the violence erupted on July 3rd, the people wrote a letter to the army which said, “Brother Soldiers, let’s unite together and defend our territory. They want to destroy our lagoons, they want to contaminate our rivers. Brothers, our children are in danger, our youths, our adults, the humanity of Celendín is in danger.” Atuq himself delivered the letters, one by one, to the soldiers, and they struck up a friendship. The soldiers said, “we have not come to clash with you. We’ve come simply to acclimate ourselves, to see an other reality. Ya you understand, we have our bosses and they have brought us here to acclimate ourselves, but we will not be here very long. As you’ve shown us with your letter, you all are absolutely right because our job is to defend the territory when it’s in danger and now the territory is threatened by the Transnationals, that is Newmon.” Nobody knew what was going to happen on the 3rd of July: “from what high command, what high-ups sent the order for them to shoot us. I suspect from president Ollanta Humala himself, a liar that came here to the province of Celendín and in a meeting said, ‘what do you want water or gold?’
‘Water!’ we said to him.

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘because your children don’t drink gold, because your children don’t eat gold, they drink water! Vote for me and I will help defend your water.’ We supported him, I supported Ollanta Humala but not so he could betray us in this way.” Father del Mar also told the story of how Ollanta won the election, asking, “do you drink gold or water? So all the world responded, ‘WATER!!!’ Celendín said it like that, so where are we? The pueblo is tricked… Here what hurts the pueblo is the treason of Ollanta no? it hurts muchísimo and it hurts because I bet on him, for a change. We all bet on him and he betrayed us.” His words echo back through history to the inaugural deception of Francisco Pizarro, these moments seared into peoples’ hearts. Then Atuq did something I will never forget, he addressed Ollanta directly. He was looking into the camera as if it were the president himself. He imagined that, somehow, the president of Peru might one day hear our conversation. He began by saying how the brothers in the high part, for example in Huasmín and Sorochucho, have told him, “if you have the opportunity to talk with señor Ollanta Humala, tell him that we are happy here, happy with our nature because our animals drink pure water, we drink pure water, so what more can we ask from Mother Earth? When we get sick we don’t ask señor Ollanta Humala for medicine to cure ourselves, we have our very own plants, the nature here give us what we need to cure our bronquios, our colics, so let us live in peace.” Then Atuq continued, addressing himself directly to the president, “…and it’s true, señor Ollanta Humala, let us live in peace, like this, as we are, with our economic poverty, because only one group of millionaires like you has all the wealth. We don’t care if you leave us as we are but let us live happy with our nature, let us live happy with our lagoons, with our rivers, señor Ollanta Humala please.” He spoke to Ollanta as if they were equals, just like how Máxima spoke to the court. In
these moments the possibility of mutual recognition arises and while it’s never quite realized, the possibility is there, because Máxima and Atuq, among others, hold it open.

There is a similar moment in Peruvian literature when Arguedas embraces Don Felipe Maywa “as equal to equal.”310 The other villagers call Arguedas ‘Doctor’, putting him on a pedestal, which ruins “even the light of the town” for him. They pay Arguedas respect by pretending not to recognize him. (13) The submissiveness of the other villagers reminds him of Alejo Carpentier who, as Arguedas writes, “looked very ‘superior’ to me… his intelligence penetrates things from the outside inward, like a ray of light; his is a brain that takes in, lucidly and gladly, the stuff of which things are made and he dominates them.”(14) Later Arguedas addresses Carpentier directly, “In you I smelled someone who considers our indigenous things to be an excellent… raw material to work with.” (14) Is it wrong to magnify these moments of individual lives in order to understand larger socio-historical dynamics? Not when we are considering “a person whose experience has been on a national level”(21) as Arguedas writes about himself, but it’s also a statement which applies to Eriberto, Máxima, Daniel and Atuq.

These moments of mutual recognition, or even just the possibility thereof, are the dawning of the Andean Utopia. The gaze is reversed, breaking down the hierarchies and bringing the condescending, pretentious ‘masters’ back down to earth. A battle is being waged over the dignity of the campesinos against all those who would debase them, see them as less than human, in a single word, obscene. Father del Mar lamented how Cajamarquinos are often branded as terrorists311 and blamed for the economic backwardness of Peru: “all that is lies, nothing like that has happened. We have experienced a total injustice that should not have been unleashed here.” Just simply being proud of who they are, proud of their peasant culture, is a remarkable victory flying in the face of centuries of colonial ideology: “They’ve been abusing us for over 500 years… psychological,
physical, the deaths of our Indians, of our campesinos, the rape of our Indias, imagine it!” Atuq told me that the worst effect was how the mine turned families against families, “the Transnationals come to make us fight between our very own brothers of Celendín.”312 Father del Mar agreed, “the mining has brought nothing but division. Truthfully, among Christians, it has made us fight ourselves.” The campesinos say that the cops are alienated campesinos ashamed of their roots. Señora Santos would go up to the police and tell them in the face:

“Where are ya’ll from? From a mother. We’re defendin’ the water, ‘cause water is life, ya’ll don’t drink water? Ya’ll don’t need water? Ain’t family men? Don’t got kids? You don’t got hearts!!’ I’d say to ‘em, ‘Where you from? Most ya’ll are from the country and know that the farmer father from the country works for your livin’ of all ya’ll. How’d they raise us in the country? They raised us on vegetables, peas, all kindsa beans, papas, oca, olluco whatever we’d got. So ya’ll should value it. Why loathe the country folk if y’all are sons of peasants too?’ Just like that I’d talk to the policemen.”

Atuq referred to himself and the other guardians as “lovers of nature”: “we’re not terrorists, we’re peaceful here, very peaceful, lovers of nature ya.” The Guardians of the Lagoons became the mouthpiece for a revived Earth consciousness, the resurgence of the Pacha Mama, buried for centuries deep in the unconscious. Ending his interview, Father del Mar said, “we are within our rights to defend the environment, we know about how the world is in climate change bien grande and we have to defend her. The truth is it’s our house. The church, in this sense, defends Creation at cloak and dagger as we would say… in the name of God I invoke you to think, to reflect that life is above money. Much thanks.”

Another outstanding moment of betrayal and shame occurred when police impeded the pueblo in their funeral march and, to everyone’s astonishment, actually knocked over one of the coffins! The coffin tumbled to the ground amid gasps and cries. Concerning this shocking moment, Yeny Malqui López, widow of the man whose coffin fell, said, “The police wouldn’t let us pass. The coffin of my husband went forward and they knocked it on the floor, todo. I went forward
with despair and as I passed a group of soldiers— excuse my language— they said to me, ‘¡Oy’
conch’e tu madre, get outta here!’ They said, ‘¡Get outta here! ¡¿Or you also want to die like a
dog?!’ I said to them: ‘Ya you have killed my husband,’ I told them, ‘What are you waiting for?
¡Kill me too!’ And they said, ‘¡Ah, ya, If you want we’ll do it! Get outta here, you bitch conch’e
tu madre, if you don’t want to die!’” Yet another example of the terrorism of the State and Yanacocha.313

There are many more fragments that I could relate, shards of experience that flash up from
the unconscious: ‘Conga No Va’ and ‘Agua Si, Oro No’ painted on the facades of houses all over
Celendin or how people brought out jars full of bullets314 and teargas grenades which they had
saved. People told me how the police and military scanned the streets for bullet casings the day
after the fatal shootings on 3rd July, so as to leave the shooters unidentifiable. There was the man
that Lynda and I met who showed us his bloody pant leg. People said he had gone crazy after he
was shot on the 3rd of July, held up in his room. A small, quiet man with a strange smile on his
face, happy to show us his pants with the blood still caked on the leg. Father del Mar told of an
experience he had seeing a pequeñito, “he wasn’t even three years old, he found himself with the
army and the police in a store, and the pequeñito goes and says to the soldiers, ‘are you going to
kill us?’ Here the children are traumatized because this had never happened before and to see
shooting and to see tear gas bombs and everything, the truth is that it’s very sad. I have lived it and
truthfully we call to justice and the love for thy neighbor and that people know the truth.”

During another incident on July 3rd, Marco Arana was sitting on a park bench in the plaza
de armas of Cajamarca with a sign that read, “¡Life yes, Gold no!” Without warning Arana was
surrounded by thirty policemen and brutally beaten on the back and kidneys. The police lifted
Arana up, twisted his arms behind his back and fractured his upper jaw with two blows of their
batons, then they threw him to the ground. They lifted him up again as he screamed, “don’t hit me!”, raising two arms in peace. When a distressed woman asked the police, “why are you doing this to us?” the only response she got was a brusk, “porque son perros conchatumadre” [“because you’re dogs, motherfucker”]. Without a warrant or flagrant crime, Arana was arrested and taken in an unmarked van to the 1st police station in Cajamarca where they continued to beat him for half an hour until his lawyer arrived. The effects of the detention were: a broken upper jaw, a cleft sternum, severe damage to the trigeminal nerve, problems with his teeth and contusions on his kidneys, back, chest and face.315

Atuq told me what it was like to live in a state of emergency: “We were clandestine for 8 days, after the deaths pues. Milton, Ramón, Ponce, myself, we were with orders of capture.” They had a few strategic spots where they hid. The first day they hid in the Parish, “thanks to the Father, excellent, but someone had informed the Father that the police were going to raid. The church has an interesting intelligence service. We have one excellent compañero who transported us from one spot to another in a car, but putting many people as bells, that would watch out.” They left at four in the morning for the Casa de Promotores: “they also helped us a lot.316 Later they told us that they were going to raid the Casa de Promotores.”

“And did they?” I asked spellbound.

“Yes, but they didn’t find anybody there… after that we went to a place that puta nobody thought, but thanks to the contact that we had…” They had someone from a very well-off, prestigious family of Celendín supporting them. He had family in the military and was informed of their plans. “This guy would never in his life betray us.” But still they were worried. “puta, we thought that ya any moment they’d catch us. I remember that I said to them, ‘huevones, this idiot says that tomorrow they’ll catch us all and throw us in jail in Chiclayo,’ and they shit themselves
huevones, because they’re going to be faggots, ‘in Chiclayo they’ll fuck you damn it\textsuperscript{317}, come, I’ll fuck you here so that you go spoiled carajo! Right now give me your asses for a song, I’ll spoil you,’ I said to Ponce, to Milton and to Ramón, ‘I’ll spoil you, huevones de mierda... tomorrow they’ll bring you to jail and you all need to go ya spoiled’...jajajajajaja... ‘Better get used to it ya all at once! There strangers will [do it]... here at least it’s the comrades of the lucha’... jajajajajaja... ‘Come here comrades, I’ll break you,’ I would say to them... jajajajajaja.”

ATUQ: “Ramón pucta nervous bastard\textsuperscript{318}, he was in shoes, pucta he prayed that diosito lindo bring his old shoes di? His sneakers. ‘Don’t take away my shoes,’ he’d say.”

PONCE: “‘Let’m take me away with old shoes,’ is what he’d say. When they were persecuting us, Ramón had his new shoes and they costed a good price, and so he wanted somebody to bring his old shoes, so that if they took him, capture him, he’d go with the old shoes and save his expensive ones.”

ATUQ: “He was more worried for the new shoes von!”

LIC LIC: “More than his ass! Jajajajaja.”

EVERYBODY: “Jajajajajaja.”

They were like that for 8 days. People talked about how they’d hidden themselves. They continued coordinating the resistance in secret: “We had a contact that arrived. We made the agreements and he’d go out ya to tell the people.” But they came out of hiding for the burial of the martyrs of water: “puta, we went to the cemetery. We appeared up top, puta all the people were frightened no? But the next moment, puta in three trucks, we disappeared again... puta because [there were] a shit load of soldiers that would want to capture a leader... they wanted to kill a leader so that the people choke and don’t continue fighting.” I can see them in my mind’s eye, the leaders of the resistance appearing on a hilltop in the cemetery and then disappearing without a trace, sending a message to both the pueblo and the police, “\textit{jijj Vamos Pueblo Carajo, el Pueblo no se rinde Carajo!!}” [People let’s go Damn it! The People won’t surrender Damn it!].
Atuq often talked about the psychological war that accompanied the overt conflict: “Their objective in killing people here was… they have their psychologists no? They have cholos of all sorts. Here the people in Celendín are very fearful ya and they said, ‘pues if we kill 4 or 5 here, the people ya will never take to the streets again,’ but the studies of their psychologists, sociologists were not successful because the people became very indignant. It was a big mistake of the government and the mine and the mayor, a big mistake to order that they kill people because the deaths here in Celendín extended the lucha to a national and even an international level!”

While Atuq and the other leaders were in hiding, Atuq’s family also felt the terror closing in on them:

ATUQ: “Ya I have a relative down in Chacapampa, and my señora went with my son to sleep there, because they sent word that the police were going to enter and you could see that the intelligence service thought we were there. They had seen that my wife and son were down there and they thought that we were there too. From the roof they saw that the soldiers had surrounded the house. The following day they found cigaret butts toditita319 around the house which the soldiers had smoked ya, they had drank liquor… and the people are very fearful in Chacapampa. It’s a humble neighborhood, very fearful that the soldiers had entered and had surrounded the house and there was my wife and my son… and they also were very scared. The next day, ya they didn’t return to sleep down there, they went to another place. They’re very complicated moments, when ya you enter a state of emergency you lose rights at any moment. They can raid your house and make you disappear…”

LIC LIC: “Really?”

ATUQ: “Of course, they took people, they took innocent people to Chiclayo, anybody that they found on the street, they’d beat the shit out of him and take him away in helicopter. They took like 35 Celendinos, took them to Chiclayo, people that had nothing to do with it ni mierda, only people that were supporting the struggle, but they weren’t leaders… puta and they beat the… we had one compañero from Cortegana, and they really beat the shit out of him320. They broke 5 ribs, they broke his nose, that is, they had tortured him so that he tell them how we were organized: ‘How are they organized? You’re a leader, how are they organized?’ puta they really beat the shit out of him321. They brought him ya almost dead and dumped him in Cajamarca and like this, they’ve beaten many people to investigate how we are organized… [Atuq laughs to himself]… what shit’s he going to declare? He didn’t know anything… that’s what happened.”
“Later, we ya came out again [from hiding], right there, we called a meeting again in the state of emergency, mobilizations in the plaza de armas. On the 28th of July the police were going to parade von, and the night of the 27th we organized ourselves.” Atuq said that the people warned the police that if they paraded there’d be another confrontation carajo...

“…but they never paraded and we did instead von. The night of the 27th the people set off in two groups von, one group left from the monument and the other group left from the pedagógico and we advanced simultaneously, block by block, until we reached the plaza de armas. We met at the municipality von, in minutes two thousand people von, puta and the other comrades were on the mountain shouting CONGA NO VA! illuminating puccha, it was a sign that we were organized, ya, and the police didn’t parade von, they didn’t parade ya, and what’d they say brother? they said, ‘but who organized it? The rondas didn’t organize it, the P.I.C. didn’t organize it,’ pucta and the police said, ‘the fucking cripple organized it,’ that’s what they call the Father von, and it wasn’t the Father either von! Four women had organized it von, of Celendín, they organized every bit of this movement. Ya and they didn’t parade the 28th of July.”

“People walked in silence with ribbons streaming…”

“In the night the police stomped on our candles no pue?”

“[I’d like] to throw gasoline on these guys no? Makes me angry. We set up our human torches.”

I’d like to relate one last story Atuq told me, to emphasize the irrepressible spirit of humor which people carried with them, transforming even the most dire moments. During the state of emergency, compañero Ramón, compañero Milton, compañero Ponce, and Atuq had to travel to Cajamarca to meet with other leaders. When they returned home to Celendín, they had to call a meeting urgently to inform the bases about the decisions made in Cajamarca, but they couldn’t meet publicly because it was prohibited. Nevertheless, they risked it and called a meeting in the Casa de Maestro. “It was no more than 2 or 3 days after the deaths of our brothers.” They put a comrade up on the third floor as a look out, “watching like a bell, as we call it, strategically, and if soldiers came he’d warn us so we could take measures to escape.” They chose “DIABLO” as
their password: “If he said ‘Diablo! Diablo!’ it was because the soldiers were coming ya to the Casa de Maestro and were going to beat us mucho.”

ATUQ: “So our comrade saw that the soldiers passed, formaditos about 100 soldiers and desperately he called out, ‘Diablo! Diablo!’ and all the world that was inside began to despair, and some dove into the bathroom, others hid under the table, others climbed onto the roof, others kneeled down to pray, because they thought the soldiers were going to beat them muy feo. And well, we waited for them to enter, I climbed to the second floor to see what was happening no? and there was no other choice but to face them for the fight, but the soldiers simply passed, nothing more, ya they passed, but the comrade was nervous and he thought they would enter to beat us.”

PONCE: “I came but I was a little late and ya they didn’t open the door because they had a great scare.”

ATUQ: “State of emergency pue. They had recently kicked the shit out of us [with the deaths], pucta the nerves no? pucta mare. I knew SUTEP, in the darkness I took off upstairs von, where the music console is and there is a spot, a narrow passageway, and concha su madre, I hid myself there while the soldiers… fuck it, this huevón had seen soldiers passing by, when it was their routine! They would always pass that way, patrolling, and he thought that ya they’d come to kick the shit out of us. Shit, later ya I came down to collect everybody pucta some were on the roof, no? you were there…”

PONCE: “They were desperate, that’s what I’m saying, I also went pue, but everybody was with susto and nobody answered me pue.”

Atuq showed me the narrow passage where he had hidden himself. There was a wooden bannister now, protecting us from a gaping void, a sudden drop to the first floor. But when Atuq was hiding there was no bannister: “pucta and I was ready. If the army came I’d throw myself through here huevón.”

“To escape?” I asked him.

ATUQ: “No, so that if they entered through here, I’d thrown them to the void. I was hiding ya awaiting what hours come. If a soldier came with weapons, pucta I’d grab him and I’d throw him to the void and I’d grab the weapon, ya I was there ready ya von, nobody knows this spot pue, ya because before there were no bannisters, so if the soldiers entered here pucta I was ready to push them von. This was my mind if one came at me, you understand.”
Atuq relived his experiences when he told stories, that’s what made him a great storyteller. At that moment he was tense and still, his eyes burning, remembering the awful dread, but then he gave me one of his mischievous smirks, “Afterward, we need to laugh about all this that’s happened to us.” And it’s true, every time he retold it people died laughing. He called this story, “Minuto Diablo” or “Devil Minute”.

On the evening of 28 August, 2012 Peruvian Prime Minister Juan Jimenez announced the government’s decision to order the suspension of the Conga mine project. Newmont would have two years to come up with a way to guarantee that safe water could be supplied for residents of Cajamarca if the mine was to be built. Newmont’s CEO Richard O’Brien stated, “Right now we don’t see [a successful operating] environment in Conga. It will take a significant change to make that happen.”324
ASCO DE GOBIERNO

LOS MATA Y NO

DEJA QUE LOS ENTIERREN COMO LES ES ÚSTO:
DESPIDIÉNDOSE DE LA PLAZA QUE LOS VIO CRECER

y al final sus hermanos tendidos se imponen a la dictadura del miedo y de las armas,
únicas herramientas de diálogo con que cuenta el estado de la derecha.

PERÚ NO ES UNA MARCA, ES UN CRISOL DE HERIDAS PERPETUAS

Figure 7.4
VISIONS OF SOVEREIGNTY

As Schmitt writes in the famous first sentence of *Political Theology* (which is also a stand-alone paragraph), “the Sovereign is he who decides on the exception.”\(^{325}\) Can you feel the earth quaking? But what is the ‘exception’? That’s for the Sovereign to decide. That’s what makes him the Sovereign. He decides not only what the exception is, but also what is to be done to eliminate it. At least tentatively, we can say that the exception is a set of conditions which threaten anarchy, chaos, and the disillusion of the State: “The exception, which is not codified in the existing legal order, can at best be characterized as a case of extreme peril, a danger to the existence of the state, or the like. But it cannot be circumscribed factually and made to conform to a preformed law.” (6) Following Hobbes, Schmitt argues that the ‘exception’ is the *occasion for and of the revelation of the true nature of sovereignty*.\(^ {326}\) It’s as if the Sovereign were waiting in potentiality until the conditions presented themselves for his appearance. The exception is both part of and not part of the juridical order (Agamben). The exception is the moment when a juridical order must be recovered or created anew, and in order for the Sovereignty to have the power to do so he must be “unconstrained by formal rules.”\(^{327}\) The Sovereign is simultaneously inside and outside the law, and this entrance of the outside is the *emergence* of the Sovereign during the state of emergency. Within a theological model it is equivalent to the way a miracle erupts into the profane world as a manifestation of divine grace and power. This is the way the Peruvian State sees itself, as equivalent to a transcendent God standing above and beyond the masses of *campesinos*. And yet, the Peruvian State is always clamoring about reestablishing ‘the rule of law’ [*estado de derecho*] Law! Order! Progress! these abstract notions which lead nowhere and remain just that, abstractions. There is no Sovereignty in Peru, everyone knows it.\(^{328}\) The State is a puppet of the transnationals, I heard it said over and over again. As Tracy B. Strong writes in her Foreword to *Political Theology*, “To
look only to the rule of law would be to misunderstand the nature and place of sovereignty.” (xxi) Schmitt would be dead set against the blind obedience to the Law, for mechanization leads to a ‘degenerate decisionism’, and we already know the Sovereign is he who decides. A true Sovereign is a challenge to the bourgeois ‘discussing classes’ with their everlasting conversations, which in Schmitt’s mind only lead to neutralization, depoliticalization, and inhuman technologizing. Rather, “political power is to be understood on the model of God’s creation,” (xxvii) and that requires a person who decides, not just an automatized bureaucracy which mindlessly follows protocol.

But the way the campesinos understand the state of emergency is much more in line with Walter Benjamin. Benjamin reverses Schmitt’s thesis by stating: “The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the ‘state of emergency’ in which we live is not the exception but the rule.”329 In one blow, Benjamin dismisses the notion of the exception, thereby condemning the abominable excesses committed in its name. We are already in “a case of extreme peril,” the emergency of not having water anymore, for example, or the death of the planet Earth. And consider how this crisis is intensified for a predominantly agrarian society such as Cajamarca. Rather then the Sovereign miraculously appearing in the exception (transcendence), which is how the State would like to be seen, we see the emergency constituted by the oppressive “miner-military régime” as ever present (immanence), for the last 500 years in fact. Within this framework, sovereignty is the will of the pueblo and the Pacha Mama as expressed in the notion of bien vivir.

To better understand the sovereignty of the peasant resistance movement I now turn to the thought of Georges Bataille. As he writes, “The sovereignty I speak of has little to do with the sovereignty of States, as international law defines it. I speak in general of an aspect that is opposed to the servile and the subordinate.”330 Revolt is the will to be sovereign: “to belong to oneself and no one else.”331 For Bataille, sovereignty begins when “the possibility of life opens up without
limit.” (198) It is “life beyond utility.” (198) Now it is true, this sense of life beyond utility was not always present in the resistance. There were specific goals which the people fought for, namely saving their lands and their ways of life, and specific means to accomplish those goals. They called it “trabajo de hormiga”, which is literally, ‘ant work’ (going community to community spreading the word about an upcoming mobilization; endless meetings extending for hours and hours; tirelessly organizing of resources, time, people, transportation). But in certain moments, this sense of limitless possibility emerged. During songs, dances, laughter, dreams, divination, and mythical stories, for example, or when the exuberant swells of the crowd overwhelm all plans and rationality. All of these forms of sovereignty are moments of unknowing. We don’t know where a song, joke, dream or omen comes from. They erupt suddenly and manifest a transformative power. These phenomena are objects of knowledge “whose conditions can be known in the same way as the other objects of knowledge”, but what makes them rare and privileged is that these objects are accompanied by strong emotions that “interrupt or override the flow of thought” and take “all knowledge away from us” in what Bataille calls “the moment of rupture”: “The miraculous moment when anticipation dissolves into NOTHING.” (203) Bataille has a long list of possible forms which this miracle can take: laughter, tears, poetry, tragedy and comedy, play, anger, intoxication, ecstasy, dance, music, combat, the funereal horror, the magic of childhood, the sacred, the divine and the diabolical, eroticism, beauty, crime, cruelty, fear, disgust, wealth, violence, glory. Bataille notes that classical sovereignty does not conjoin all these forms in a complete unity (230) but nevertheless they are all examples of “those sudden openings beyond the world of useful works.” (230) If forced to chose one term that comes closest to all these aspects of sovereignty it would be the term festival. (231)
Bataille’s redefinition of sovereignty includes the beggar as much as the great nobleman, though, “as a rule, the bourgeois is voluntarily the most far removed.” (197-198) The beggar (or the campesino) fascinates Bataille for his or her “apparently lost sovereignty.” The recurring tragedy of killing the king comes to mind, both in the Carnaval’s burial of King Momo and the garroting of Atahualpa, but also the debasement of Máxima as the miners and police kill her animals, burn her shelters, destroy her crops, and charge her with crimes she didn’t commit. Or the debasement of the city of Celendín when the police killed 4 people, occupied the city for 8 months, pissed and shit in the water supply and left underage girls pregnant. Here we find the resonance with Bataille’s phrase, “sovereignty celebrates its marriage with death.” (211) Yet it is an apparently lost sovereignty, because death is nothing to the sovereign. Death “is that which his presence denies, that which his presence annihilates even in death, that which his death itself annihilates.”(223) The sovereign “is the one who doesn’t die, for he dies only to be reborn” (222). Sovereignty is “the refusal to accept the limits that the fear of death would have us respect,” (221) and this is what the campesinos have learned by waging their resistance. They stare death in the face, and those who die live on as martyrs of water. As the Lady of the Blue Lagoon, Máxima overcomes her debasement through defiance of the System set against her. When she sings, when she laughs, Máxima partakes of this miraculousness: “the impossible coming true” (210). The struggle between Yanacocha mining and the Guardians of the Lagoons is at root a struggle between two different visions of sovereignty: ¡Agua Si! ¡Oro No!
Figure 7.8

Figure 7.9
The police arrived in Yanacocha buses. Sometimes, when there were too many of us, they wouldn’t attack, they’d just watch like vultures.
The concept of emergency powers was fundamental to the formation of constitutions and the building of republics across Latin America. That is to say, the ability to suspend the constitution was central to constitutional design. The justification used for the inclusion of emergency powers was the alleged ‘backwardness’ of the Latin American people. Latin Americans were believed to be especially vicious and corrupt, “thus the rule of law could not be applied until the population acquired necessary republican virtues.” The main representative of this republican rhetoric was Simon Bolivar. He stressed that authoritarian regimes were needed “to curb [the] widespread destructive behavior” of a society invaded by vice. This logic reappears throughout Latin
American history: “echoes… may be found from Juan Manuel de Rosas in Argentina and Diego Portales in Chile.” Others believed that governments should establish strong executive powers in their Constitution in order to lead Latin American countries toward a path of economic prosperity, an argument which also relied on the supposed backward nature of the population, i.e. a people without virtue.

This idea of the backwardness of the Latin American people still persists today as the unexamined cornerstone supporting the neoliberal ideology of progress and development. Just consider Peru’s national slogan: “Perú: Progress for All.” The neoliberal ideology is heir to the colonial logic of master and slave (White/Indian, Adult/Child, Man/Woman), where the first term is always superior and the second is inferior. The same hierarchy of value persists, for this reason, neoliberalism might as well be called neocolonialism.

From the halls of history’s broken mirrors, allow me to recall one time when the Fiscal [Public Prosecutor] was particularly patronizing to the peasants. Hundreds of us were gathered outside the courthouse of Celendín demanding the release of six men that had been detained by the police while driving along public roads that crossed through the Conga mega-project. Two guns were found on them, one of which was old and didn’t work, “it was just for show,” Atuq told me with a quick smile. The men were beaten and brought to the police station of Celendín where they were immediately whisked away to the city of Cajamarca and then, to everyone’s dismay, they were again whisked away, this time to the coastal city of Chiclayo. New laws dictate that all arrests related to Conga must be brought to far off Chiclayo, putting the resistance at a great disadvantage as it removes the rebels from their communities of support. It also suggests that the attorneys in Cajamarca are not competent (i.e. backwards). Thankfully the resistance in Cajamarca has ties to many social justice organizations all across Peru and the world. Milton made a few
phone calls and suddenly there was a mass of protestors outside of the jailhouse in Chiclayo demanding the release of the Guardians of the Lagoons.

So there we were, chanting and clapping, dancing and singing, causing an uproar in protest. After about an hour the Fiscal came out to address us. Milton was trying to calm everybody down…

Milton: “If any of you compañeros want to make a criticism you can make it compañeros, but with respect ya, and in this way we will demonstrate once more that this pueblo is a dignified pueblo and that thanks to the struggle of the pueblo we can conquer our rights.”

Everybody: “Bravo! Bravo!”

Fiscal: “Good afternoon to all those present. Who speaks to you is the Provincial Fiscal, José Alcántara Vásquez, Fiscal of Celendín, appointed since the year 2005, and in our public ministry institution since the year 2001. I have the experience to talk with you all and also the modesty. I’ve also been a social fighter. I understand your claims because, as I see it, you all are within your legitimate right. The Public Ministry is never going to be against the legitimacy of the social expectations of the pueblo. We can disagree but one must respect those positions that come from humble people like you all, from the people, from the citizens standing up for themselves. We are also of the pueblo and we defend this.”

A murmur of frustration rises up from the peasants, they’ve heard his empty talk before.

“Silence!” shouts the Rondero discipline.

Fiscal: “At the beginning of the month of March I was named coordinator of this institution here in Celendín, of the criminal part, so I can personally tell you that we will never be against the citizens, honest workers, housewives and children that are present. But we all must set a good example for the youth by behaving ourselves! Despite the fact that there are discrepancies of the methods or forms or ideas about the fines, objectives and expectations, we should behave ourselves as the citizens that we are. Our country is… ya I have show, it’s an emerging country. We would like to be as the 1st World, and how does that start? by means of good customs, good practices. One must change our country starting from childhood. If we want to be a developed country that reaches cultural, economic and social goals we should give example to our children, so that when ya we are out of this world they will follow our conduct. That’s what I think. Señores, I have worked 32 years in a national university so I also know about education, but my position is besides the point. Señores, what I can tell you all here is that, speaking with your leader,
we decided that we want to make a change of dialogue. This dialogue should be two part, because if the dialogue is only of one [person], it’s not [a dialogue], a dictatorship perhaps, but in legal affairs yes, one has to respect the law. Sure one can also interpret the law but when there is a situation that is a social affair of the pueblo, one must have ways that can bring us to a good resolution, without violating the law but also without trampling the rights and expectations of the whole population. We also are of the pueblo, we also drink water, we also breath the same air, we also want our futures to have a possibility of life here no? but that does not contradict the social and economic development of the country. That’s why speaking here with el amigo Milton, I told him, I’ve had other positions in Cajamarca, in Chota, in other places but now I am appointed here and I have been in Cajamarca five years working, no pues?"

A mototaxi tries to pass by the crowd but the Rondero discipline shouts: “Stop right there! No passage!” He blocks the road. Nobody drives through a protest of the Rondas.

The other Ronderos echo, “There’s no passage! There’s no passage!”

The Fiscal continues: “The rights of you all are known by the population, I don’t invent them. You all have the right to expression, to critique, as Milton said here, the critique of the public institutions, because we are all full of defects but we are not all equal. Like in the home, some children are good but some are bad, that is to say, you can not ask perfection of a country that is on the road to development! Our institution also has good elements, the policial entity and all that, but there are also bad elements that we want to expel. The wind goes in that direction and we support it. There have been some problems here in Celendín that thanks to God ya have been resolved. In these situations the bad elements must be expelled. Like this, I said to Milton, in the institution of you all there are also excesses, one also has to cut that…”.

The crowd begins to mutter angrily.

Fiscal: “My word! If I am going to speak I would appreciate it if you didn’t insult me, that would not be good because I am respecting you, I am speaking to you in friendly terms ya, I think you understand me, I suppose, in that sense we want to have a dialogue with the friends of the rondas campesinas, come from whereever they come, we are not interested in their political positions but rather that they represent a social force, and also the friends señores of…”

No longer able to contain his rage, the vice president of the Rondas bursts out: “Of course compañero we are in agreement, but we are not in agreement with the abuses! The police invaded rondero territory! They’re abusing and beating our compañeros! We ask from the heart that they be human, that they be conscious that they can not violate human rights, nor violate the constitution itself and later come to say, ‘Brothers, we don’t want violence.’ And the roadblocks! The roadblocks are
on the public road and how many times have they stopped the compañeros up there from traveling? Que miércoles335 has the Judicial Power done?! What, compañeros!?!"

Everybody shouts: “They haven’t done anything!”

Another Rondero calls out: “…last time we were traveling in a combi and they detained us at the roadblock compañeros and would not let us pass because they said that we don’t have the permission of Yanacocha in order to travel on this road. Well that’s sure something new compañeros, that Yanacocha has to tell us where we can travel and where no compañeros. I thank you compañeros once again, ya it’s not the first time that they detain our compañeros, it’s the forth occurrence in recent times that they’re detaining us and we know that it’s a juridical persecution and a political persecution that they’re doing to us, but this compañeros, this does no harm to the environmentalists, nor does it frighten us. We know that when they detain us or jail a compañero, that’s when they give us more strength and with these detentions they’re never going to make us quiet this new political, social, environmental thought that is growing within each one of you compañeros! I would like to ask for three ‘vivas’ for the lucha… Viva! Viva! Viva!”

I was left with my jaw dropped. How can the Fiscal speak to them that way? His words reproduce a hierarchy of value which is colonial in nature. And how can everybody else just accept their inferiority, their sub-development? Of course, ‘Progress’ is the only salvation. One glance at the history of conquest and it all becomes understandable. The Fiscal is playing off their assumptions. The people assume that they lack something… that’s why they need development! As the most educated and professional among them, the Fiscal can scold them like children or Indians sin razon [“without reason”] for he is the intermediary, one of them (as he never tires of repeating) and yet also the closest to the coveted prestige of Western civilization, the furthest along on the road to Progress. As you can see, the Fiscal belittles and infantilizes the campesinos. He represents Order and Work,336 while the campesinos are foolish children that need to behave themselves. He will lead them by the hand into the 1st World. But, while the Fiscales may represent education, class, and civilization… really, they’re mestizos too, they’re part Indian. They are ashamed of that part of themselves contaminated with Andean savagery. As intermediaries between civilization and savagery, the discourse of the attorneys reveals the colonial wound.
This little shard from my journal sums up the pretentiousness of the judiciary: “fiscal in a grey suit in the market, mixing it up with the common folk, wipes the seat of the mototaxi with a napkin before sitting down.” God forbid his backside should get dirty.

Ideology removes all questions of power and makes everything a matter of ‘behaving’ oneself, behaving rationally, being civilized. Ideology is the occlusion of interest under a veil of normalcy: knowing that one must go through the appropriate methods for the recognition of rights and the administration of justice while at the same time actively forgetting that the courts and police are shamelessly corrupt. Ideology depoliticizes the cultural war inherent in the imposition of the enlightened West’s code of signs. Grow up! Get with the program! Or are you sub-human? All possibility of difference is eliminated. The attitude of the attorneys is like that of the engineers with their Environmental Impact Assessment when they silence the campesinos by shaming them for their lack of intelligence, which really amounts to their lack of the proper vocabulary, their inability to speak a specific discourse: “What are you worried about? You’ll have more water than when you started! Ignorant, culture-less donkeys.” But not all the campesinos accept their inferior status. Those that resist and affirm the folk culture as valuable in and for itself are the ones leading the resistance movement against Conga. They reveal the politics inherent in the invisible war of ideology simply by defending the dignity of peasant life.

It reminds me of Slavoj Žižek’s article on the debt crisis of Greece, “This is a Chance for Europe to Awaken.” Žižek urges us “to move beyond the irrelevant debates about the possible mistakes and misjudgements of the Greek government.” Rather, the conflict is “symptomatic of our whole political process.” According to Žižek, the Greek prime minister would like to treat the disagreement as a political dispute. Alexis Tsipras would sit the Chancellor of Germany down and “they would find a formula in two hours” to solve the crisis. That’s cause they understand that they
are part of “an open political process where decisions are ultimately ‘ideological’ (based on normative preferences), while the EU technocrats talk as if it is all a matter of detailed regulatory measures.” The motto of Jeroen Dijsselbloem, the Eurogroup president, is, “If I get into the ideological side of things, I won’t achieve anything.” This leads Žižek to the heart of the matter: “the denial of ‘the ideological side’ advocated by Dijsselbloem is ideology at its purest. It masks (falsely presents) as purely expert regulatory measures that are effectively grounded in politico-ideological decisions.” Žižek sees our political process as characterized by this passage from politics proper to neutral expert administration: “strategic decisions based on power are more and more masked as administrative regulations based on neutral expert knowledge, and they are more and more negotiated in secrecy and enforced without democratic consultation.” The technocratic administrators that Žižek targets are mouthpieces of the same neoliberal ideology which is currently ravishing Cajamarca.

Ideology keeps the mining engineers working with a clean conscience, refusing to see the horror they are responsible for. And whatever manages to slip past the ideologues (i.e. the engineers of the mine, the corrupt legal system, the media…) gets thrown to the dogs, i.e. the police. “But really,” Atuq whispers to me with a snicker, “the police are just the fleas of dogs, the colonels are the dogs.” It was a cop that told this to Atuq one day while standing around at a protest. Atuq said to the cop, “Brother, why do you defend the transnationals and oppress the pueblo? You should defend the pueblo! This is why the people call you dogs.” The cop responded with a shrug, “We’re not dogs, we’re just the fleas of dogs, our commanders are the dogs.” Of course there is ideology behind the police brutality as well: the belief in the ‘Rule of Law’, state sovereignty, nationalism, hierarchy, authority, progress, the backwardness of the peasants, and all the rest of the ideas that keep the nightmare of history on track. But there are fissures in the spectacle of order.
Police are the fleas of dogs, *chupa medias* [sock suckers, ass kissers], not only to their commanding officers but to the mine as well. There is a contract between the National Police Of Peru and Minera Yanacocha with the chilling title of “Extraordinary Complement to Policing Services”. It sure is extraordinary. On the local blog “Celendín Libre”, Cesar Vasquez Bazan, calls it “the market of buying and selling police mercenaries,” and he notes that Yanacocha pays the captain of the *tombos* [pigs] 38 soles a day ($13.57) and a sub-official 18 soles a day ($6.43) for service in the mine. In circumstances denoted as “special,” the pay can be as high as S/.78 a day (US$28). They are permitted to use state-provided weapons and wear police uniforms but no name tags of course. As Lynda Sullivan writes, “In the modern age of this international political economy, the objectives of both state and private enterprise are difficult to separate. The police and the media are overseen by a dubious legal system, and assume the role of defacto shock-troops and the vanguard of yet another incursion into this land.” There have been a series of new laws, starting in 2002, which have institutionalized state repression and criminalized protest. The police mercenaries are aided by law No. 30151: “which grants members of the armed forces and national police exemption from criminal responsibility, on occasions where they cause serious injury or the actual death of civilians – while on duty. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, has expressed deep concern about this law, referred to by the National Coordinator of Human Rights in Peru as a ‘license to kill.’” A recent victim was Fidel Flores, shot and killed by subofficial Norvil Gonzales Silva during an eviction on the 3rd of Oct. 2014.

“In Cajamarca, the people are protesting the death of a 62 year old mechanic, father of seven children and grandfather of seven grandchildren. The Minister of the Interior, Daniel Urresti, has recognized that there was an ‘excess’ and he has asked forgiveness of the Flores family. 62 buckshot pellets were found on the clothes of the deceased.”
It might come as a shock to hear that state policy is designed for the systematic violation of human rights. A study by the Canadian lawyer Charis Kamphuis helps us understand the effects of privatization on the police forces of Peru. In his study Kamphuis affirmed: “Under the pressure of countries exporting capital and international financial institutions, the Peruvian government has institutionalized the primacy of the rights of investors in the form of increased protection of property rights and investment. In this context, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has concluded that the patrimonial, social and economic rights of rural and indigenous communities are systematically violated in favor of laws and practices that promote mining and the free market.”

To date, authorities have not established criminal responsibilities for any of the dead civilians in the contexts of socio-environmental protests and, indeed, not one of the victims’ families have received reparations.

The Congress of the Republic continues to bury the abuses in filing cabinets, paralyzing debate and stalling the enactment of fundamental laws, such as the law of Ordenamiento Territorial [land management]; the ban on mining in headwaters; the utilization of highly dangerous toxic substances such as mercury and cyanide. Everyone knows: “no hay agua en Cajamarca” [There’s no water in Cajamarca], and yet in their slogans Yanacocha continues promising the people: “With good mining above, more water below…”, “First water, then mining”, “Conga: the mining company for the people”.

On their web site, Yanacocha tries to assuage the population’s fears:

Q: Does the water that comes from the mine contain cyanid and heavy metals?
A: On the contrary, the treated water that Yanacocha returns to the environment meets national and international standards of water quality.

Q: Is it true that Yanacocha dries up our waters?
A: Yanacocha does not dry up the water, all the rainwater falling in operational areas is conducted outside through bypass channels and coronation.
Q: Is Yanacocha responsible for affecting the basin of the Rio Grande?
A: The quality and quantity of water in the different basins has been maintained throughout Yanacocha operations. For some cases there may be indication that the dumping of treated water has even improved natural pH, encouraging the presence of fish such as is the case in the area of confluence between the Rio Grande and the Purhuay gorge.

[“A normal pH for water is 6.87. When it goes under 5 the water becomes acidic and trout begin to die. In the Rio Grande and Rio Porcon, the two biggest rivers supplying Cajamarca’s drinking water, we observed a pH of 3.5. It’s catastrophic.” —Reinhard Seifert, environmental engineer and ex-president of the Environmental Defense Front of Cajamarca]344

Q: Is it true that Yanacocha consumes a large part of the water of Cajamarca?
A: Yanacocha uses significant amounts of water, but does not consume significant amounts of water. In this process water quality is renewed and returned to rivers through treatment plants. It is water that is not lost. 1% of the water of Cajamarga is used in mining, 4% in the city, 24% in agriculture and 70% goes to sea. Seventy percent of water that could be exploited throughout the region ends in the ocean! Water issues, which raise many suspicions and concerns, can be solved together with the authorities, development organizations and private enterprise. Cajamarca has plenty of water, we must learn how to collect it.

In the final comment (“we must learn…”) the discourse of backwardness can be detected. The engineers will teach the ignorant peasants, who are conveniently excluded from the process, how to maximize the utility of their water. The questions and answers go on and on, compulsively silencing the opposing view with an impenetrable wall of facts. It is only possible to argue with the ideologues if you speak their scientific language, which peasants do not. Even the slew of hydrologists and other scientists who criticize the Conga mega-project have made little impact, but together with other segments of society, they form part of a resistance movement which has succeeded in keeping the mine at bay… for now.

The media is a powerful weapon in this shadow war fought over the value of peasant life. “Terrorists infiltrate the strike!” reads a headline from *La Razón*, “Minister of the Interior, Óscar Valdés, warns of the presence of members of Sendero Luminoso in the protest.” Another headline from *Perú 21* on July 7th, 2015 reads “Cajamarca is the new center of cocaine production.” And
yet another Perú 21 cover from 2012 reads, “Narcos vs. Conga: Cajamarca is the new center of drugs”, showing stacks of dollars, drops of blood and a hand gun resting on a pile of cocaine. Lower down it reads, “mining zone is area of production and transit of coca and poppy. ‘Bambamarca on the way to becoming a Medellín,’ warns specialist Antezana.” And alongside this stunning commentary of yellow journalism there is a nude white woman juggling two enormous cherries whose stems form a heart shape, “games of seduction” page 22. On top of the page it reads, “Today Special, The Avengers [in english] guide 1.” And below that a soccer player bent over with his head in his hands: “The end of the Barza era.” Just to give you a sense of what passes for mainstream news in Peru. On channel 45, the only television channel in Cajamarca that criticizes the mining companies, Lalo Valera shakes his head and comments, “that’s how things are [around here].”

When confronted with these smear campaigns, Atuq would say in response, “They’re desperate. They don’t know what they’re saying. The people ya don’t believe them. The revolution is near.” Atuq told Luna and I about a T.V. game show called ‘Leaders of Knowledge’ that is sponsored by Yanacocha (along with the University of Cajamarca and the Provincial Municipality of Cajamarca). Through some institutional pressure they had forced his friend Wilson to participate. Atuq and Wilson were old friends and both worked as teachers in Pedro Paula Augusto Gil or the “centro base” as they called it. Wilson was anxious, he had entered a few of his students into the game show. They couldn’t pull the girls out, because they had gone with their parents and everything, so there had been no other choice but to participate. “So they participated and they did very well huevon. There’s going to be an awards ceremony and they’re going to give a computer to Wilson, una laptop. It would be a mistake for Wilson not to accept it. But if he does receive it people will criticize him because he is a luchador and a founder of the P.I.C.” Wilson made the
decision, he was consulting Atuq that day in fact, to receive this laptop and give it to his student, to the daughter of a compañero that had died in the lucha. “The daughter is very intelligent but her father died in the lucha. One of the four fallen. Once he gives her the laptop Wilson will pull out a sweatshirt that says CONGA NO VA! and that’s when he will say on all the media, ‘This contest of yours is fine but CONGA is not going to happen! Conga is inviable! And with this you will not be able to buy consciences.’ There will be many mediums of communication present. But also,” he turns to Luna, “you should accompany us to film because the filming they will do could get lost. You’re film will be proof that the people are solid in the lucha and are not going to sell their consciences.”

Former National Coordinator of Human Rights, Rocío Santisteban, has identified the discourse of the Peruvian State as “conspiratorial-paranoid” which reduces rural people to mere automatons who follow radical leaders whose sole purpose is to position themselves politically at the national level. Similar in tone to State discourse during the ‘dirty war’ of Peru’s internal armed conflict, the conspiratorial-paranoid discourse brands peasants as rebels, extremists, terrorists and drug-traffickers, but above all, as ignorant and hinderances to development. It is a discriminatory and exclusionary discourse fueled by reports of the Intelligence Services of both the State and the mining companies, and organized as a ‘narrative’ by the Office of Social Conflict Resolution led by sociologist Victor Caballero. This discourse claims that many of the conflicts in Peru are caused by a group of violent extremists interested in destabilizing democracy and weakening the rule of Law. All conflicts, according to Victor Caballero, are linked by winding underground relations to violent groups of extremists and radicals.345

The authorities have denied the use of lethal force on July 3rd and 4th, 2012 suggesting that the victims were caught in the fire of their fellow protestors. At first it was reported that two
policemen were injured in what the Ministry of the Interior described as “criminal acts” caused by “bad leaders”. One police officer claimed, “The population of Celendín attacked us, in an exaggerated way. That's why I have this wound in the face. I was careless and they shot me.” The Ministry of the Interior and the National Police expressed their strongest condemnation of actions that “far surpass social protest to become criminal acts.” They also vowed to not rest until they found those responsible for “this blatant attack on authority and the Rule of Law”. The Ministry of the Interior urged the leaders to not exacerbate the violence, who must be brought to justice for their actions. Once it came out that civilians had been killed, the Interior Minister Wilver Calle Giron continued to blame the leaders of the resistance movement: “We deeply regret the death of these compatriots. These facts are a damning consequence of violence that some leaders have promoted who must now take responsibility.” Prime Minister Oscar Valdés also condemned the acts of violence in Celendín and accused leaders of being responsible, “I think that Peruvians can no longer endure bad leaders who push the people to commit violence, and in the end we're left with dead. We demand that the Judiciary do its job. Last year we reported about the blocking of roads and the exercise of violence against policemen and citizens, yet they have not condemned anyone.” He added that while the executive branch has the obligation to impose order, it has to have the support of the Public Ministry and the Judiciary. The Justice Minister also stressed that the police did not use lethal weapons in the clash, “The authorities will have to investigate the causes of these unfortunate deaths.” He urged the regional president Gregorio Santos to keep quiet, without inciting violent acts. “I call on the demonstrators to keep their composure.” Can you hear the colonial overtones? It’s as if he were talking to children, implying that the protestors must behave themselves.
But there are other versions of the events. The regional director of Health, Reinaldo Nuñez, said the troops had injuries from fireworks, but none were from bullets, as the Ministry of the Interior reported. He also maintained that civilians did have wounds caused by firearms which contradicts assertions by the Interior Minister, who assured that members of the security forces used 'non-lethal weapons' to repel rioters. Human Rights Watch found evidence that strongly suggests that the deaths resulted from the unlawful use of lethal force by the security forces. “The soldiers were deployed in large numbers after police lost control of the situation in Celendín, in large part because they ran out of teargas, the top police commander in Cajamarca told Human Rights Watch.” A report by the ombudsman’s office called “police training in nonlethal crowd control inadequate and said officers don’t have sufficient nonlethal weapons.” Yet Angel Castillo, spokesman for the Ministry of the Interior said supplies of teargas and rubber bullets are adequate: “There are always stocks to cover the needs.” The brutal fact is that the police are more than ready to take the life of their fellow citizens. “After the July 3rd clash in Celendín, national police chief Raul Salazar commented tersely on the deaths, telling reporters that his officers’ job is to ‘maintain Order with the lowest social cost.’” Similarly, Octavio Salazar, a congressman and former national police chief said, “When the hordes attack and police are at a disadvantage, then, in those extreme cases, firearms are used.”

“Since 2006, bullets fired by Peruvian security forces to quell protests have killed 80 people and wounded more than 800, according to the National Coordinator of Human Rights.” “Officials in the Ministry of the Interior did not respond to requests for an explanation of why so many protesters are killed by gunfire in confrontations with police.”
“Cajamarca is the New Drug Center”
“Death to the Miserable Dogs”
Figure 7.16

Figure 7.17
ATUQ AND THE MINISTER OF WOMEN

Atuq: “If somebody stronger than me is going to hit me, pucta ni cojudo huevon, [I’m no idiot] I take a chance, I give a quick shot when he’s not ready. If I see that he is pretty strong… I’m sly, then I run for it. But if I see him sorta weak… then yea I’m going to hit him, puta, right there, yea, more machazo pues huevon.”

Santi: “It’s like when the Ministra came. You said you were like Bruce Lee. There were 4 cops?”

Atuq: “4 or 5 tombos, there ya one has the internal force, huevon, puta! No pasaba ni mienchas con los tombos huevon, [The pigs ain’t got shit] 4 or 5 police couldn’t get me into the car, but the commander came with a stick and gave me it in the stomach… but it was a big mistake, a big mistake huevon, puta because that’s when the fight broke out huevon. Puta I was scared, they had me fucked ya, the tombos had me ya bringing me to a car so that they could bring me ya away from the city and nobody tried to defend me huevon, but it was a big mistake… when he had a long stick like this, thick like this, takes a big swing and puts it in my stomach, the commander himself huevon… here ya 4 or 5 tombos had grabbed my arm ya, they twisted my arm, because I had a great force… they could not move me huevon, 4 of the DINOES, some tremendous, tall ones that could not move me. I, puta a force mienchas I had ya and the commander comes and grabs me and gives me the stick in the stomach, I was caught like this… it’s cowardly… and there my breath weakened a little, but it was a grave error, because ahí se armó una bronca ni mienchas [that’s when the fight broke out, no shit]. The women were very good! I was caught, ya they had me fucked, they gave me the palazo [police baton] and Nicanor, puta Nicanor went and gave a big knee in the balls to the Commander. He grabbed the Commander and jua kneaded him good, jua in the balls… right there the Commander cagado [shit himself]. Puta se armo la bronca, 5 more came, they took Nicanor away, dragging him by his coat… pucta Nicanor fought, carajo, he struggled… and me, puta, they let me go. Again I start to fight with the tombos, pucha and that’s when the women came huevon, no? Little old women, young women, pucha, women are strong fighters, the women von are very strong in the lucha. It was the viejitas [little old women] dove in kicking von, a group of viejitas, like 12 viejitas von, viejitas von! That’s why I have high esteem for the viejashas von, because they threw punches and kicks von and didn’t let them take me, they freed me, but viejitas von! viejitas jajaja… they broke the eyebrow of a señora huevon, another they knocked down, they threw [teargas] bombs again and there puta se armo una broncotatota huevon… Nelo was there too, still alive. We almost got to where the Ministra was huevon, puta the cowardly Ministra, the cause of all this problem, pucha she threw herself from the stage, they say she escaped huevon.”
LIC LIC: “It’s funny no? The women fighting against the Ministra of Women. She doesn’t even want to listen?”

ATUQ: “We went with signs to say to the Ministra that she must explain to us if someone was detained for the death of our brothers. How’s the investigation going no? Why so much abuse no? We want some answers… but the police had closed the streets huevon and wouldn’t let us pass and would only let the humble people pass, so they could take photographs and say that Celendín is still pacified, but earlier Ramón and I went and conversed with the Commander. The Commander asked if we were going to make a mobilization. We told him, yes, but our mobilization will be peaceful and he said to us, ‘I am in agreement, as long as it is peaceful but if something happens, you all are responsible.’ That’s how we left it with the Commander but when the time came they closed off the street and wouldn’t let us pass. So I complained to the Commander that he was not keeping his word. It’s going to be a peaceful mobilization and now you are shutting down all traffic, so how can we make our demonstration before the Ministra? And they had put up rope, a police rope, 1,2,3, in the other corner 1,2,3 like that and they wouldn’t let us pass and when I complained to the Commander, I remember, and the people were todititos behind me, I complained to him and there the Commander turned his back on me, he turned his back on me when I said to him, ‘You act this way because you’re receiving money from the mine,’ and he didn’t like that huevon and he ordered that they capture me, that’s how it was and from there, that started off toditito the problem. It was a grave error because una broncota se armo… The women! Florcita got a gash on her eyebrow, along with many other women, no? Una broncaza se armo… Crazy Chávarri, that’s what I call her, puta, muy bien Crazy Chávarri, she got into the fight with the tombos, and they also broke her nose.”
8. CONCLUSION
In a chapter of *Yawar Fiesta* titled ‘The Dispossession’ we find a story that by now should be all too familiar to us: “In the olden times, all of the mountains and fields on the puna belonged to the *comuneros*. In those days there were not many cattle in Lucanas: the *mistis* did not covet the grazing land. The great high, bleak region was for everyone. None of the pastures were enclosed by stone walls or barbed wire. The big puna had no owner. The Indians lived free everywhere: in caves in the rocks, in huts they built in the hollows, at the base of the mountains, near the springs.” (10) Occasionally the *mistis* came up to the puna to hunt *vicuñas*, buy meat or, “out of pure cussedness,” steal livestock from the Indians. The *mistis* would fire their guns and crack their bullwhips to herd the sheep together. But sometimes the *punaruna* would resist, “surrounding the important people and the bullying *chalos*; then the *mistis* would run away or be stoned, right there beside the herds of sheep. After that would come the deterrent: uniformed police on the puna killing old Indians, women, and little children, and then the plundering.” (11) These periodic invasions then became the norm when “All of a sudden there was a great demand for cattle on the coast, especially in Lima; then the *mistis* began to take over the Indians’ wheat fields to plant alfalfa in them.” The hacienda owners employed the police, beating and evicting people from their land: “And the important people were almost frantic; they ran the Indians off to grab their land, and once again they made the judges, notaries, and court clerks sweat…Year after year, the important people would draw up papers, all kinds of documents, swearing that they were the owners of this spring, of that grazing land, of the fields with the best pastures, nearest the town.” (11) Without their lands, “the *punacumunkuna* looked lost; suddenly they seemed like orphans.” (14) Those who resisted would end up “painfully straining in the stocks or hanging from the bar.” (14) Now comes the reversal. Through the gaze of power, victim is transformed into aggressor: “when the town notable lifts his finger and points at the Indian, saying ‘thief,’ a thief he is, a downright
thief, a recognized cattle rustler.” (14) Máxima and the other Guardians of the Lagoons would nod their heads sadly, labelled, as they are, criminals, terrorists and drug-dealers. They would see themselves in the *punacomunero* suffering in jail, singing through tears. Especially the singing! Earlier in *Yawar Fiesta*, Arguedas writes fondly of the Andean Indians who, with joy in their hearts, know how their towns look from afar as they approach from a mountain pass. They are “familiar with distances”, unlike the coastal people whose towns have no mountain passes (they have lost their culture, lost themselves):

> “To see our town from a pass, from a mountaintop where there are magic heaps of stones the travelers leave, and to play an arrival *huayno* on a *quena* or *charango* or on a harmonica! To look down upon our town… to watch the kestrels and black hawks soaring in the sky over the town, and now and again a condor who spreads his great wings to the wind; sometimes to hear the crowing of roosters and the barking of the dogs who watch the corrals. And to sit for a while on the mountaintop to sing with joy. This is something those who live in the coastal towns cannot do.” (2)

**PACHA MAMA 2014**

Every morning in the fields behind the *central base*, Atuq sat in a circle with the children in his gym class and said the prayer of Physical Education. I heard them recite it on my last day in Celendín. It was not the ‘Our Father’ but a pagan prayer of his own devising addressed to the powers of nature. After the prayer he told the children, “when we do this prayer in a group of three or more, you feel more force, more energy *ya* God for me is a fire and we are little sparks of this fire and we are little gods *ya* but if we put these little sparks together, we gather 2 sparks, 3 sparks, 4 sparks, 5 sparks, we have more power, more force, *ya*, and if we’re 20, 30 human beings together like one fist *ya* we’re going to become a little fire that has more force, more power, and if we gather 100, 200, 300, 400 and thousands we become a God with more force, a fire with more force, with more power.” Atuq went on to tell the children, “human beings are not the only little sparks
of God, rather everything that has energy is a little spark of God, for example a rock has energy, it’s part of God, a plant has energy, it’s part of God, a blade of grass has energy, it’s part of God.” Here he emphasized the “tremendous respect” that was needed to gather together human beings, plants, animals… “we even have to respect the air, the wind, respect the sun, respect the moon, because all of these stars, all these phenomena have energy ya and we can’t lose sight that everything that has energy is God… we’re going to gather ourselves together, we’re going to respect ourselves, gathering together these little sparks, we’re God and we have a very strong power.” He expanded in ever widening circles: the union of the family, friends, community, “if we extend all this to a comprehension on a world level, this for me is God. God is not something that is in the sky, that he is going to solve your problems for you, no… Each one of us is God, ya, if we do things well or if we do things bad there also is the devil within ourself.” The class ended with a burst of exuberance as Atuq asked me to run across the field, leading the children like a flock of highland gulls, all of us flapping our arms like wings and crying “lic lic, lic lic, lic lic!!”

After class, Atuq further developed his theory: “In these times that we’re in right now, there are two groups of people in humanity. One group wants to destroy the Mother Earth, the Mama Pacha, destroy her for personal interests, economic interests. They want to take out the gold that is there in the Mama Pacha. The other group is defending her with its life so that ya there is no more destruction of the Mama Pacha. So for me, those that are defending the Mama Pacha, we’re good people, people of good heart and that is the God of good, when we all gather together, but those that want to destroy the Mama Pacha, ya they’re bad people, their God is money, their God is gold, without concern for the Mama Pacha, but they don’t realize that if they destroy the Mama Pacha, they are also going to destroy humanity and they’re going to destroy themselves.” Atuq told me that, the world over, we need to call on these people to reflect, “don’t mistreat the
Mother Earth, *ya no más, ya* the Mother Earth is very badly wounded.” But then he switched gears, as was his foxy way, “at the same time the Mother Earth is gathering all these sparks in order to form a great fire and be a very strong God in order to beat this God of Money, *pues* what we have to do in order to have power is gather ourselves together like one fist… all of us that have life.”

Atuq always impressed upon me that we were charging with energy, with spirit, “yes, when we’re together, when we’re in a circle, when we’re having a conversation. Of course! I don’t know if you realized that when I do my classes with students I do not make lines, I make a circle, *ya*, a circle, and we feel the energy of each one of us, *ya*, and well, each one of us goes charging with energy equally.” He really emphasized what he called “equilibrating”, “if everybody charges with energy equally, every time we have more spirit, more soul, more power.” He said this equilibrating occurs when we walk together, “in good times, bad times, we’re in the cold, we’re in the heat, we’re hungry, we’re in a downpour, this suffering that you apparently pass through is not suffering because the Mother Earth goes charging you with lots of energy *ya* and when you are a person without ambitions in your interior, a person without egotisms, you are free *ya* and other people also, there are many in the world, and you achieve that the holy spirit impregnates your body *ya* and everybody here wins, everybody, there’s not one that loses and an other that wins, no, we all win because we go sharing our energies and we equilibrate *ya*.”

It was here that his ideas became especially interesting for a theory of animism: “one person that has spirit, that has soul *ya* is like a mountain that has spirit and has soul, like a lagoon that has much force, much energy, a waterfall *ya* the human being is like this, when you have soul and spirit you are so strong… Nature is so strong, these lagoons, these rivers, these waterfalls, so strong, because they’ve gone forming through the generations, over millions of years, and so many things have happened to it, that’s why Nature has so much life, so much spirit… they are something
mystical. A scientist will never know what it is that happens in Nature, there will never be a scientist in the world that knows what it is that the human, when it has spirit, has soul, is capable of. Each moment of our life there are supernatural things and the only one who is wise and knows what is happening in each one of her children is the Mother Earth... the Mama Pacha.” In contrast, the mine operators “are very empty, they don’t have spirit, they’re just like dead people, the only thing that interests them is money.” The miners are the hollow men: “There are many people like this, empty like the open pits. They’ve killed the Mother Earth. Now the Mother Earth with her open pits ya has no life. They are exactly the same, like open pits, without life... ya there could be 100, 200 or even 1000 of them, but one person with spirit can confront that 1000, that’s why this is happening in actuality cause of this monster of the Transnationals.” He said that the members of the P.I.C. are very few but they’ve got spirit, soul. They go along equilibrating “very strong”, why? “Because we go along charging nature itself with energy, the good people themselves that there are in the world, so much so, when there is conversation or when ideas are transmitted through space, with the wind ya even this has much to do with forming our spirit, our soul, our ancestors, our martyrs, that ya are not, that died for defending the Mother Earth, ya, even them, their spirit itself is with us, is in our spirit, that’s why we are stronger every day.” Atuq ended with his characteristic black humor: “Ya and to all the people without spirit we’re going to give them a little bit of spirit jajajaja even if it’s a whipping carajo, we are going to straighten them out and we are going to pass them a little bit of spirit, because there’s no other choice.”
LAGOON IMAGINATION VS MINER MENTALITY


The contrast between the green sweeping landscape and the grey sand of the mines is haunting, apocalyptic. Modern experience is mined, hollowed out. A miner mentality seeks to exploit any situation, like an anthropologist that mines people for their ethnographic gold, an extractive study that leaves nothing but poison in its wake, because people were always commenting, “oh he notes all this down, takes these pictures and then brings it all back to his country to get rich.” The miner mentality emphasizes self-interest, egoistic rational utility, competition, and is profit oriented. A mining mentality versus a lagoon imagination! Because the highlands of Conga are supersaturated with water and this excess translates to a mode of living and writing: *an experience that flows lawlessly in all directions.* It is a model of experience which takes waterflow as an image of visionary imagination, experience as drenched in mythological and erotic phantasies. Excessive free flowing imagination, flows of phantoms, subterranean flows of desire. Flooding, gushing, submerged and drowning in the unconscious. Subterranean rivers corresponding to flows of unconscious impulses, wetlands, an excess of desire. The highland lagoons are an image reservoir, the water-shed, a phantom-shed. Rivers of voices. The earth and the body form a gestalt, the mountain is a human mountain.\(^{356}\)

In Cajamarca, the official story is that indigenous roots were severed with Conquest. Except for one or two towns, people do not speak Quechua anymore, which would be proof of their indigeneity. And yet, if we listen to the peasants, we find that indigenous Andean perspectives of rhizomatic interconnectivity are still present.\(^{357}\) Up in the Bambamarca camp, José Ramos Carrasco told me, “the water is born from the foot of a mountain, it comes almost like a river, and this is what maintains the Black Lagoon, and from the Black Lagoon it goes down to the Dry
Lagoon, from the Dry Lagoon it goes down to the little Mamacocha, and from the little Mamacocha it arrives at the Big Mamacocha, and from these lagoons come different water sheds that maintain the Big Mamacocha and these waters are the ones ya that the wetlands, by means of veins ya goes subterraneously and this is what goes down, is born and arrives in Bambamarca, el Tambo, Llaucan, these waters of these four lagoons.”

Doralisa, a woman who was responsible for feeding everybody in the Bambamarca camp, told me: “As a women I feel that the water is for everybody, and the water is a being for all living beings, whether person, animal or plantitas, because without water we don’t have nuthin, and that’s why we find ourselves here, in our lagoons taking care, as guardians.” As a mother, she worried that the men were hungry, so she decided to serve them, making their breakfasts, lunches and dinners “so that they feel good in their nourishment because men are pobrecitos [poor little ones], they won’t do it like it should be, like a woman will prepare the food. They don’t know what to do, so we do it. As a woman, I’m here in order to serve my compañeros, so that they won’t ever surrender in our fight.” Doralisa left her house, left her husband, abandoning everything in order to take care of her lagoons and serve her compañeros ronderos: “I have to be here until the day that they kill us, these scoundrels, the miners, the transnationals, they’re killers, they’re not people, they’re ya monsters. They only think about their gold, about their silver, and they don’t think about nuthin else.”

Doralisa remembered when her abuelitos would say, “some day little ones when you’re big we’ll go to visit the lagoons: the Mamacocha lagoon, the Alforja Cocha, the Azul lagoon, the El Perol lagoon, the Negra lagoon. The mother of the Mamacocha is a little one but it’s deep: the Munshuy.” Her grandparents told her that in the Munshuy all the animalitos put their eggs, all the birds, “the Lic Lics, the Tuilas, the Garzas, the Eagles, the Owls. We find eggs of all the animalitos
there in the Munshuy lagoon, so it’s very beautiful. There are so many lagoons here, and our *abuelitos* would say to us, ‘you have to visit them, you have to go.’” Then Doralisa said something which impressed upon me yet again the continued connection between the peasants and Nature, the peasants’ deep knowledge of interconnectivity and workflow: “we’d go to the lagoons and put carnations and roses in order to see what river threw them out, so my *abuelita* would say, ‘we’ve thrown em, we’ve tied the carnations and the roses and they were thrown out to the river Tejido, to the river Batan, to the river Mitomayo, to all the rivers little ones,’ they’d say, ‘so it’s these lagoons that maintain us,’ they’d say, ‘so these lagoons are our rivers from which we have our irrigation.’”

The values of the highland peasants in Cajamarca ultimately come down to a collective interest they call *convivencia* or “coexistence” (including all of Nature as well as the human community) which is opposed to the egotistic self-interest of the miners. Due to the devastation facing Pacha Mama, there has been a resurgence of animistic sensibilities which have taken on political significance as the boundaries between Nature and Society continue to be contested.

Nowhere was this point better made then on Christmas. Atuq invited me to spend it with his wife’s family in Cajamarca and it just so happened that his wife’s brother’s wife’s brother was a higher up in Yanacocha. We sure had ourselves a merry little Christmas, jammed on a couch in the backroom of a tiny *bodega*. The miner spoke four European languages (but not Quechua). He was fair skinned, embarrassed by Atuq’s dirty jokes, and then he admitted that he’d never tried *coca*! (The next morning Atuq and I had a long conversation about alienation, how people become ashamed of where they come from, trading in their *poncho*, *sombrero*, and *llanques* for jeans and sneakers. Atuq said alienation is when a person loses connection with their own childhood, the time when the relationship to Nature is most powerful.) We stayed up until dawn drinking beer
and talking, talking, talking and more talking about the mining conflict. At one point the miner even brought out a dry erase board, which happened to be against the wall, to draw up the numbers and figures to prove once and for all that Cajamarca would in fact have more water than before the mining started. The miner was talking: “Look, Atuq, in the first place what we need is funds, we need money in order to help with everything, and first of which is the base of development. We need to create infrastructure right? and after that we need training, because a car is worth nothing if you don’t know how to drive.”

ATUQ: “Of course, of course.”

The miner said he believed we should improve public politics, “that is to say, permit that the money that the mine generates is transmitted or converted into a benefit. How? Improving the infrastructure, improving the education programs. It’s not the responsibility of the mine to guard this.” He paused a moment, high on the fumes of his own bullshit, “you know, the mining makes a big contribution to the national PBI [brute internal product] no? so if the people paralyze all the mining products in the country, your salary will probably be reduced by 40%, considering that the mine supports close to 19% of the PBI, so imagine that that’s what happens, your economic conditions would be poor, you’d be in poverty, so for the sake of building yourself a better future, a better salary, and also to look after your job in education, because you will have to dedicate yourself to other activities in order to make a little more because you need to survive. So this is a chain Atuq, this is a sickness and we need to attack it from the root. But it’s not the obligation of the mine to come to the government and improve the education. Atuq you don’t know how much the company contributes in order to improve education but this is a job for everybody, it’s not the job of the mine. The people believe that ya the mine came and the mine is a panacea, it’s the herb that cures all ills. No! Here we need to unite everybody.” We stared in disbelief as he took a sip of his beer. Then he said, “Let’s suppose that the mining has not worked. Now there’s a new strategy of development no? Look at how mining changes, because they learn from their mistakes, ‘here we’ve failed,’ no? But let’s suppose that the mining project won’t happen, because we need to have alternatives no?

Atuq looked him square in the eye and said: “Look, I have seen the highlands no? ya and I think the best alternative that we can give to those people and the best alternative we can give to our children and to our grandchildren and to all our generations is to conserve our rivers, conserve the aquifers, conserve that. What do we win having infrastructure, having maybe good education if there’s no water? The problem is water. It’s a world problem. From there the rivers are born, five rivers are born from there.”
MINER: “Atuq, Atuq, from there the waters are born?”

ATUQ: “Yes, from the lagoons the rivers are born that go nourishing the *pueblos* in the lower parts.”

MINER: “Atuq.”

ATUQ: “From the aquifers like veins they go down subterraneously to the lower parts, and eyes are born and from there the waters are born”

MINER: “Atuq, if you who’s a teacher makes claims in this way… now I understand why the people are so easily convinced no? But Atuq, the water cycle!!! Ahhh!!!! My God, they taught us this in elementary school, how the water cycle is generated. What happens is that the people have a myth. They say, ‘here is the lagoon and under the lagoon there is a factory of water [*fábrica de agua*], I don’t know what it is, from there the river is generated, that’s how it is Atuq, the lagoons are bodies, they’re tailings that with the formation of the earth have been able to generate a loamy base where the rain water of the basin is stored because there’s no leak. Very good, the lagoons contribute water to the basin, to the rivers, they contribute but by filtration, that is to say, these are not in reality lies. But rain! Atuq, always.”

ATUQ: “They’re aquifers, when it rains the water is stored in the aquifers and when *ya* it doesn’t rain, from there the water jumps to the rivers.”

MINER: “Of course they store the water.”

ATUQ: “They store.”

MINER: “They store temporarily and from there by filtration.”

ATUQ: “Yes.”

MINER: “Exactly, you know why, because for example here in the highlands, I don’t know if you have realized, in the rainy season we have tons of water.”

ATUQ: “Tons of water yup.”

MINER: “But in the dry season only drops of water.”

ATUQ: “Yes, but they maintain you, there are years that it doesn’t rain or it rains, they maintain you because they’re your aquifers, your reserve…”

MINER: “But what do they maintain Atuq, if the people here in the country, when *ya* there’s no rain, the people don’t even have enough water to drink.”
ATUQ: “No! There is water, Celendín has never lacked water!”

MINER: “There’s no water, there’s no water, and therefore why are there not two harvests a year? Why is there not good grass during the whole year, because only…”

ATUQ: “Imagine, if right now when it’s natural and there is scarcity of water, what will be when they destroy every bit of the lagoons, destroy all the aquifers?”

MINER: “No but… your theory Atuq, look you are my friend but your theory is so radical, it’s base is extremely weak. You know why? Because if you knew the hydrological study of Conga you’d know we have Toro Macho no? the Alto Jadibamba, we have Chugurmayo, Chirimayo and we have Chaullagon [artificial reservoirs], true, but now if we are going to talk about how many percentages of the micro basins will be affected, for example in the case of Toro Macho we are speaking of only two percent of all the micro basin…”

ATUQ: “That Conga will effect.”

MINER: “That will effect the flow of the rivers, that is to say it would affect an area that we consider two percent of the micro basin. Very good. In the case of Alto Jadibamba it doesn’t even reach one percent. That is to say it’s so low on all sides and in all the basins, only Toro Macho and Chaullagón reach two percent of the micro basin and in the case of the other three basins they are only percentage points. So it’s very low. Is there an impact? Yes there’s an impact, but you are not going to tell me that by impacting two percent of a basin you are going to affect all the micro basin and dry up all the rivers.”

ATUQ: “That’s the Conga project… but Conga is only the first stage, afterwards comes the second stage that is Galeno and the other mines.”

MINER: “But, look, how can I explain it to you? Sadly the deposits of Perol and Chaullagón are close to the lagoon no? But not all the deposits are like this. So in first place, we can only develop the project if the government or the authorities say there is environmental viability no? That’s why they’ve done the studies no? So right now engineering has developed so much that it challenges nature itself no?”

ATUQ: “But you know what’s the problem in Peru? The president has become a clown of the Transnationals. It’s a puppet show, they’re puppets.”

MINER: “This, brother, this is a political term that I heard when I was in high school, brother that’s when I heard this terminology.”
ATUQ: “They’re on their knees!”

MINERS IN BARS

Last night I met some miners, a bunch of dickheads from Yanacochina with soulless suns to spend. They’re eager and proud to invite a gringo to a few personal sized cusqueñas (“La magia esta en los detalles”) not the bigger bottles [0.630 lts] which is what people in the campo pass around in circles sharing a glass. Pour, pass the bottle, and say, ‘salud!’ That’s the etiquette, remnants of a lingering communality, but not here at McCuy’s, this place only sells personales! There are no campesinos in this bar anyway.

A bunch of new bars have sprung up around the plaza de armas. Many have Securitas out front as bouncers, from the same private security company that Yanacocha employs. These bars cash in on Andean culture, with names such as Añañau (“Delicious” in Quechua) or McCuy’s where guinea pigs are dressed up as The Beatles (painted on the wall as you come in), but it’s only show. Poncho y sombrero are out of place here. British, American and Canadian flags dominate the wall space, while the Peruvian flag is stuck in the corner. Peruvian bands cover the White Stripes, ‘Zombie’ by the Cranberries, ‘Roxanne,’ and Four Nonblondes ‘What’s up?’ It’s always filled with obnoxious mid-western Americans from the Peace Core who, like the miners, are loud, drunk, and also enjoy personal sized Cusqueñas. Something similar in their manner to the miners: arrogance. But the miners defer to me. I’m American. Though not the usual yankee with my sombrero, alforja and poncho. They eye me and ask “Gringo why do you wear the cloths of a peasant?”

“Cause in the mountains the sun burns and at night it’s cold.”

It’s all part of the bougification of Cajamarca. In strict contrast to the beggars and mamitas sitting on the sidewalk, the blind man in sombrero y poncho standing with his hand out, the women
selling *chochos y cancha*… (those white beans and rosted corn kernels) out of buckets... and all the *modern* people strolling by. A few doors down is the ‘Ransom Room’ where Atahualpa was imprisoned for 8 months.

“I want you to always feel good in my Peru,” A miner has his arm around me. “Cajamarca is *tranquilo.*” Except for the 20 years of Yanacocha devouring the land, contaminating the water, creating artificial rivers birthed from tubes which read “acid water,” spilling mercury in Choropampa, and now the mega-project, Conga, threatening to annihilate what’s left, civil unrest, persecution of *dirigentes,* militarization, 4 deaths in Celendin and 1 in Bambamarca (July, 2012), dozens of wounded, widows and orphans, rising cancer rates and prostitution, cultural invasion of consumerism... yeah *tranquín.*

It comes out that I´m anti-Conga. “O! Well we´re miners!” I listen with a mixture of amusement and disgust to his drunk, rambling excuses: “Listen to me, look, Yanacocha… begins with the rain, we have, we have, but it has a system of distillation, a system of repro… I can’t think of the correct word but, they call it… the rain… the water that they use, the water that they use they are going to repro… reprocess, all the water that comes they reprocess, for irrigation360… for everything.”

“What’s your job?”

“I work in Yanacocha as a mechanic. I am boss of Yanacocha, boss of a group, not of all Yanacocha, boss of a group. I think, for me, look, the mining, we cover the earth, if I commit an error, a spill of oil or I spill a toxic fluid… the company fines me or they throw me out of the company, why? Because we have a procedure. What’s it called? That is to say, if I make an accident, because it’s an accident, if I spill a cup, nothing more than a cup of oil…”

“Oil?”

“An oil of… hydraulic oil, as an example *ya*?”

“Like cyanid?”

(‘Wild Wild West’ by Escape Club is playing.)

“No, no, whatever fluid that would be toxic to, to, to the environment. In Yanacocha there is a procedure. The procedure is this: we unload it a meter down and cover it, all the earth and the sweat that we have expelled, we have thrown off maybe accidentally, accidentally… they have a
place they have to go, with caution, cause it’s toxic. It’s a loading procedure, a meter down, it’s a procedure that Yanacocha has. What more can I tell you about Yanacocha?”

“Whatever you want. I am interested in your experiences, how you think, because look, we have different points of view, no?”

Miner #2: “I have an opportunity to invite you to the mine itself! To invite you as a visitor, what for? Because we have a condition under review, what is called ‘Social Responsibility.’”

“¿Social?”

“‘Social Responsibility’, we have the opportunity to tell you, there are processes of osmosis, processes of… there are tractor pumps that carry all the minerals of all the watersheds, look what happens, this water that is processed, we can not put it in a river, why? Because the river ya has it’s own natural resources, the fish themselves can die, you understand. So what happens, the water that we distill for the population of Cajamarca, ya is processed for human consumption, we can not put it, discharge it to the rivers, why? Because the fish are not of the capacity, as we say, to be able to take a water that is processed for human consumption, so what happens? There are many processes, as, for example, there are tanks we have, tanks of osmosis, tanks of, that which is, processing of the cal, of everything that is processing of chlorine, all those things, all those waters we process, and all those things go to the PAD, I don’t know if you understand me?”

“To the PAD?”

“To the PAD.”

“What is this?”

“The PAD is a system of distillation, the PAD is… look look, the PAD is something… it’s like a, it’s a capsule, a capsule.”

“And this is where you put…?”

“The waste they encapsulate, they capsule, they capsule…”

“Uh huh.”

“It’s not in contact with the earth, it’s not in contact with nothing! It’s the PAD, it is created… it is…”

“Destined!”

“…destined for the waste, they are encapsulating…”

Me: “The garbage.”

“Of course.”

“It’s a recycling…”

“You can say, why? Because we have eeeeeeoh, we have eeeh, we’re out there in Yanacocha mine… or that is… todo es proceso [everything is process].” He blurts out the last part. I’m watching the psychic process of repression at work. While the only thing I’ve really learned so far is that they really like the words ‘procedure’ and ‘process.’ “…everything is a process, all that water is treatable, all is treatable, for what? For human consumption.” Heavy emphasis, as if he’s pleading his case before San Pedro, who holds the keys to heaven, but barely convincing himself. Everyone’s drunk.
“No, they renew, renew… or that is, we distill each waste, process it again, like this, like this, it’s a circuit that goes and comes.”
“It’s a closed circuit.”
“Goes and comes, goes and comes.”
“It’s a closed circuit, it’s a closed circuit that only…”
“It’s to process.”
“…human process. More no, that is to say, this water we throw into the river, what happens? The fish die, why? Because the fish are not, they can’t capture that, that, consumption.”
“There is contamination, but that’s not made by Yanacocha, Yanacocha…”
Me: “But there have been trout deaths, no?”
“No, no, no, no, listen. All the people of Cajamarca are wounded…”

And then, as if he were offering undeniable proof of progress, he exclaimed, “Here in Cajamarca we have the latest model of taxis! What other place has them? Let’s go to Lima, to Huaraz, wherever you go, there are no taxis of the latest… of the year! Taxis of the year, brother!” Like it’s the second coming. “… or no? Thanks to what? To the mining! To the people that invest here. Don’t you realize? We all have work. We all have work.”

In a drunken swell of exuberance, they buy a round for the girls that just arrived, but first joking with the bargirl, “a round for everybody.”

“Everybody?” It’s almost believable. But no, just our friends. Miner # 1 continues to talk about the unity of human life: “We have the same blood, we are humans.” Then suddenly he looks at me grinning, “The mine is contaminating everything, it’s going to kill everybody.” I look at him, I know he’s joking but psychoanalysis teaches that the subject always says more then s/he intended to say.

They start talking about a *gringa* friend of mine that comes into the bar with her Peruvian boyfriend.

I ask the miners, “Why do you think the *gringas* are more attractive?”
Miner #1: “I’d like to have my lips in her vagina.”
Miner # 2: “You are a filthy pig because the little *gringa* is very beautiful and you can’t express your feelings.”
“*Gringuita pendejita* is caught by the biggest *huevón*.”
“No, no, no, no, no, she’s a very pretty woman, but the dirty Peruvian pig, with the mind of a beggar, wants to try out a gringa and this is bad. He wants a gringa because he wants a change from the cholas that he usually has, he wants a change of pugita, the brown pussy is delicious, it moves more, the white pussy is dry, but it’s different, you understand? Your friend’s pussy is pretty, but she’s caught by the the stupidest, your friend gives her pussy to the stupidest.”

I ask again, “Why do you want a gringa?”

“She’s nice because she has values, but she wants something different, she wants something from far away, something stupid, she gives the dove for this, she gives her pussy to the other.”

“He’s crazy, he’s a shit, he’s a perverse man of evil intentions with a perverted mind.”

“He is human garbage.”

“Have you seen Silence of the Lambs? I am Hanibal Lecter, I like to eat the woman’s vagina. We’ll be friends when you give me the pussy of your friend, if you don’t, we will not be friends, cheers.” We all cheers and take a drink. My hand is drenched with sweat holding the microphone under the table.

I ask, “Only with the pussy?”

“Only with the pussy of your friend. You bring the pussy of your friend and I’ll be your friend. If you don’t bring the pussy, no friends.”

The other miner tries to help me, “Santiago, you need to tell him, ‘you invite me to the pussy of a Cajamarquina, in exchange.’”

“Yes, it’s the exchange of little pussys. I have two pussys that you would like.”

I ask them again, “why the white pussy?”

“We like the white pussy because we think it is more accessible, because sex for them is not a feeling, sex is just a pleasure. In Cajamarca, sex is still the culmination of a relationship. It’s the ecstasy, and the next step, after sex, you have to marry her. The Gingas on the other hand, we think they can have sex and don’t wait for the marriage. They want sex even if they only like a person, but they don’t expect a future together, just sex, and this is attractive to us because as men we want good sex and they give us good sex. Gingas are horny!”

THE DREAMWEAPON

“When I shit my enemies cry. When I speak they die.” — Lee ‘Scratch’ Perry

“We want poems that kill.” — Amiri Baraka, ‘Black Art’

In the singing, dancing, dreaming, jokes and stories another dimension of the resistance reveals itself, the most important part, the inner or spiritual dimension of the lucha, the moral element which causes people to dare to resist, that spark of courage, indignation, conscience, and
the will to say, “My blood, my life, everything for water!” It is the will to risk one’s life. Of course having enough soldiers and supplies matters but more important is the will to fight. In the military this mysterious element is called morale or Esprit de corps: the fighting spirit of a unit, composed of mutual solidarity, fellowship, sense of duty, and devotion to a cause among the members of a group. When a unit's morale is said to be ‘depleted’, it means it is close to ‘crack and surrender’. Battle should aim at “killing…the enemy’s spirit [rather] than… his men.” (259) These ideas were penned by Carl von Clausewitz (June 1, 1780 – November 16, 1831) a Prussian general and military theorist who stressed the “moral”, “psychological” and “intangible” aspects of war.

“The moral elements are among the most important in war. They constitute the spirit that permeates war as a whole, and at an early stage they establish a close affinity with the will that moves and leads the whole mass of force, practically merging with it, since the will is itself a moral quality. Unfortunately they will not yield to academic wisdom. They cannot be classified or counted. They have to be seen or felt.

Consequently, though next to nothing can be said about these things in books, they can no more be omitted from the theory of the art of war than can any of the other components of war. To repeat, it is paltry philosophy if in the old-fashioned way one lays down rules and principles in total disregard of moral values. As soon as these appear one regards them as exceptions, which gives them a certain scientific status, and thus makes them into rules. Or again one may appeal to genius, which is above all rules; which amounts to admitting that rules are not only made for idiots, but are idiotic in themselves.” (184)

I appreciate Clausewitz’s repeated emphasis on the fog of war: “War is the realm of uncertainty; three quarters of the factors on which action in war is based are wrapped in a fog of greater or lesser uncertainty… War is the realm of chance… Chance makes everything more uncertain and interferes with the whole course of events. Since all information and assumptions are open to doubt, and with chance at work everywhere, the commander continually finds that things are not as he expected.” (101) Clausewitz insists, “the seeds of wisdom that are to bear fruit in the intellect are sown less by critical studies and learned monographs than by insight, broad impressions, and flashes of intuition.” (185) He repeats over and over again how all of his attempts at theorization
are objectionable: “It is only analytically that these attempts at theory can be called advances in the realm of truth; synthetically, in the rules and regulations they offer, they are absolutely useless. They aim at fixed values; but in war everything is uncertain, and calculations have to be made with variable quantities.” (136) And how much more uncertain must be the intangibles: “moral values can only be perceived by the inner eye, which differs in each person, and is often different in the same person at different times.” (137) Yet he asserts that they are the most essential, the most crucial: “One might say that the physical seem little more than the wooden hilt, while the moral factors are the precious metal, the real weapon, the finely-honed blade.” (185) Clausewitz notes “their often incredible effect”.362 “How much has been accomplished by this spirit, this sterling quality, this refinement of base ore into precious metal.” (189) When I refer to the inner alchemy of people such as Eriberto, Máxima, Daniel Gil or Atuq I am referring to this same “sterling quality” by which is achieved a revaluation of the campesino, that is, the transmutation of the devalued, debased campesino or indio into an affirmation. This inner alchemy is driven by the moral values which Clausewitz posits as ‘the real weapon’ in war: dignity, courage, perseverance, cunning… to which I add humor, beauty, sorrow, absurdity, friendship and love.

Walter Benjamin calls such moral values the “refined and spiritual things” which manifest themselves in the class struggle as “courage, humor, cunning, and fortitude.” He asserts that these spiritual values have the power to reverse history: “They have a retroactive force and will constantly call in question every victory, past and present, of the rulers.”363 In The Gay Science, Nietzsche makes a similar claim, “Every great human being exerts a retroactive force: for his sake all of history is placed in the balance again, and a thousand secrets of the past crawl out of their hiding places— into his sunshine.”(104) Exceptional individuals are filled with spirit power which can
overcome the limits of the possible. They are singular cases who draw on their purity and inspiration to become the catalyst for historical awakening, which is the flip side of remembrance. As an example of the incredible power of these spiritual values consider when Zarathustra tells us that “Courage is the best slayer… courage which attacketh: it slayeth even death itself; for it saith: “Was that life? Well! Once more!” (166)

The dreamweapon causes a transformation of consciousness, the body and society. It transforms the present, wherein the past and the future are produced and reflected. Thus the past and the future become open to the interpretation of the present. The launching of the dreamweapon is the hijacking of the phantasmic apparatus which is responsible for creating our sense of reality. Stephen Dedalus, Joyce’s alter-ego, says, “I will tell you what I will do and what I will not do. I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland, or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defense the only arms I allow myself to use—silence, exile and cunning.”(291) From his letters we know that Joyce conceived of his art as working towards “the spiritual liberation” of Ireland.

These moral values generate the energy, providing the affective force of the dreamweapon. But what would it look like? What would it sound like? As Joyce says in *Finnegans Wake*, “You’ll feel what I mean.” Recall Bataille’s sense of communication: a discharge of lightening, only possible between two beings at risk. For now, let us say that the dreamweapon is composed of both powerful affects and omnisensuous language.

The original dreamweapon comes from Piero Heliczer and Angus Maclise. The first time a proto-formation of the Velvet Underground played was at an event in 1965 organized by Piero and Angus called ‘Launching the Dream Weapon.’ They described it to Sterling Morrison as a
‘ritual happening.’ Rob Jovanovic writes in *The Velvet Underground peeled*, “Unlike the earlier Theater of Eternal Music, this show upped the ante by adding dancers and poetry to the film and light shows that accompanied the music.” (37) That must have been quite an experience. We’re talking synesthetic communication, bursting expression to the furthest possible limits. A reinvigoration of the senses through a language of the phantasm: “when Angus played the bongos it was just like poetry,” said Piero Heliczer (36) Even in a silly statement like this we can see the confusion of art and sense. Everyone has heard the cry to ‘raise consciousness’, but the dreamweapon is more a raising of the unconscious, that is raising up the phantasms from the subterranean flows of the unconscious in what amounts to a universal ungrounding. While they never defined what the dreamweapon actually was, we can see that it was precisely this onslaught of light, sound, dance, poetry and music. Here is Sterling Morrison’s account:

"On an early Spring day in 1965 John [Cale] and I were strolling through the Eastside slums and ran into Angus [MacLise] on the corner of Essex and Delancey... It seems that Piero and Angus were organizing a 'ritual happening' at the time - a mixed-media stage presentation to appear in the old Cinematheque. Naturally, this was well before such events became all the rage. It was to be entitled ‘Launching the Dream Weapon’, and it got launched tumultuously. In the centre of the stage there was a movie screen, and between the screen and the audience a number of veils were spread out in different places. These veils were lit variously by lights and slide projectors, as Piero's films shone through them onto the screen. Dancers swirled around, and poetry and song occasionally rose up, while from behind the screen a strange music was being generated by Lou, John, Angus and me…”

The rest is history and, more importantly, a living myth of the underground launching the dreamweapon to attack the mind forg'd manacles of modern life.

as to what we were going to call this new dream republic
i cut up my pillow with a pair of scissors and unfurled it as a flag

In the shadow wars of ideology and mythology, fought out on the underside of events, a dreamweapon is needed, something which pits phantasms against phantasms, something which
raises unconscious phantasms up to the surface, unleashing them in a flood. The dreamweapon is
the phantasmic communication of Nature directed at an enemy. Thus one can begin to change the
imaginary of a given society, annihilating certain phantasies and healing others. In the same song
Máxima denounces the engineers and police who robbed her sheep, revealing the hypocrisy of the
Powers that be, but also, she adds Quechua endings to her words, revaluing her indigenous roots
as a thing of pride, not shame. For this reason the dreamweapon is also a dreammedicine.

ATUQ: “I wanted to say that the weapons that we have like jokes, the
dreams, we speak also of stories, songs ya… they are immensely powerful weapons
for us, immensely powerful, stronger perhaps than the rifles that the army has, the
police, stronger ya and that hurts them a lot, it hurts the businessmen of the trans-
nationals a lot, because they are not prepared for that, ya to confront our art, our
poems, our songs, ya and as they’re not prepared ya it’s a pain in their ass, their
butt hurts ya they are much more painful than the rifle is for us, you understand, in
contrast their rifles puccha when they shoot us, that doesn’t hurt von, it’s a little
heat that gives you much happiness von when they shoot you, yes, ya and therefore
in comparison to their weaponry that they have it doesn’t hurt much, ya no, it
doesn’t hurt nothing for us like our weapons that we have do to them, yes it hurts
them a lot, it hurts them a lot, it really hurts them because they are not prepared to
confront this type of weaponry that we have which is the jokes, the stories, the
poems, the songs no? What gives us much joy to them hurts a great deal. To us
these weapons that we have are our happiness, for us, you understand me, but for
them yes it hurts a lot. When Máxima is singing it kicks the shit out of them.364
Máxima, Daniel Gil, Juan Orco, you understand me no? kicks the shit out of them.
Ya or when we tell the jokes for example, you understand me, we live happy, a
tremendous joy and those pro-mineros or the mining operators todo ahuevados365
because there is no smile in the face von, there is no happiness, ya and the only
thing they care about is money! money ya and for us these weapons that we have
are our happiness but for them it hurts, it hurts them in the ass von, jajajajajaja...”

THE VOICES OF NATURE

Within the traditions of Romanticism and the avant-garde in the West, we find the idea that
omnisensuous language is the language of Nature. In 1789, Blake proclaims: “Here the voice of
the Bard! / Who Present, Past, & Future sees / Whose ears have heard, / The Holy Word, / that
walk’d among the ancient trees.” The precondition for this prophetic combination of vision and
voice is to have heard the voice of Nature. For Blake, imagination and Nature exist in a web of mutual reciprocity: “to the eyes of the man of imagination, nature is imagination itself.” In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Blake tells us how “the ancient Poets animated all sensible objects with Gods or Geniuses.” The problem is when the ‘Priesthood’ “enslav’d the vulgar by attempting to… abstract the mental deities from their objects… Thus all men forgot that All deities reside in the human breast.” (34) It is this same abstraction which in 1938, Artaud would call “a rupture between things and words.” (7)

A similar anxiety plagued Benjamin in 1933, who asked: “are we dealing with a dying out of the mimetic faculty, or rather perhaps with a transformation that has taken place within it?” In terms of language, the mimetic faculty expresses itself as onomatopoeia, where sound and rhythm are integral to the meaning of the words. Benjamin’s solution is that the old mimetic powers have hidden themselves within speech and writing, in what he calls nonsensuous correspondences. But if they have hidden themselves, or been repressed, to the point where they are inaudible, the choice between transformation or death seems to be futile, unless of course, if the sensuous correspondences lying dormant in language could somehow be reactivated. The dream of a sacred language of Nature never disappears entirely. It goes underground and then resurfaces. In 1857 Baudelaire still writes poems in praise of a phantasmic language of Nature where “Perfumes, sounds, and colors correspond.” Rimbaud perhaps went further than anybody, delving into this omnisensuous language. In 1871 he writes, “The time of a universal language will come! … This language will be of the soul for the soul, containing everything, smells, sounds, colors, thought holding onto thought and pulling.” And in 1886 Rimbaud writes of a flower which tells him its name. (215)

Then in 1935, Artaud asks, “Are there still forests which speak?” Is this the last gasp of animism in the West? Least we think that after Artaud’s devastating question the possibility of
communication with Nature is dead, Piero Heliczer in 1969 writes “the green parole of the trees”, estranging speech by substituting the French, hinting at the more general estrangement of language needed for such communication with Nature to occur. Parole also becomes the phantasmic image of the bluster of leaves in the wind, ‘parole’ is onomatopoetically the wind’s howl, as well as the vivid coloring through the word green. A howling, green speak or dream speak would thus be the nature of nature’s language.

Baudelaire claims that Nature sometimes gives voice to “confused words.” This is unlike any language we have ever heard before. Giordano Bruno agrees: “the voices spoken by humans are not heard in the same way as the voices of nature.” A sacred language is needed to communicate “occult intelligence.” (114) Bruno called this the language of the Gods, which he likened to hieroglyphics: “These were specific images selected from natural objects and their parts to designate individual things”. Bruno emphasizes the specific qualities of this language:

“not all writings have the same impact as those markings which signify things by the particular way in which they are drawn and configured. Thus, when certain symbols are arranged in different ways, they represent different things… these symbols do not have a fixed and definite form. Rather, each person, by the dictate of his own inspiration or by the impulse of his own spirit, determines his own reactions of desiring or rejecting something. And thus, he characterizes for himself each symbol according to his own impulse, and as the divine spirit personally exerts certain powers which are not expressed in any explicit language, speech, or writing.” (114)

It is the invention of the standardized language that we use today that, Bruno claims, “resulted in a tremendous loss, first of memory, and then of divine science and magic.” Adorno and Horkheimer support this argument. After enlightenment, “the separation of sign and image is inescapable”368 but in hieroglyphs, sign and image coincided: “the word originally also had a pictorial function.” Bruno tells us that the language of the Gods includes the use of “certain signs, signals, figures, symbols, gestures and other ceremonies.” He emphasizes that the magician “can
hardly accomplish anything without such sounds and symbols.” These hieroglyphs can bridge the divide between Nature, Divinity and Humanity. But what is this division? Bruno gives many examples, showing how spirits speak to us through visions and dreams “but we claim that these are enigmas”, “these sounds elude our grasp,” or how “our Latin, Greek and Italian sounds sometimes fail to be heard and understood by the higher and eternal spirits, which differ from us in species.” And again, “it is no easier for us to be able to communicate with the spirits than it is for an eagle to converse with a human.” Bruno concludes, “Just as there can be conversation and agreement only by means of gestures between two groups of humans who do not share a common language, likewise, there can be communication between us and certain types of spirits only by the use of” the language of the gods (114-115) Couliano puts the problem in these terms:

“Fundamentally, all is reduced to a question of communication: body and soul speak two languages, which are not only different, even inconsistent, but also inaudible to each other. The inner sense alone is able to hear and comprehend them both, also having the role of translating one into the other. But considering the words of the soul’s language are phantasm, everything that reaches it from the body— including distinct utterances— will have to be transposed into a phantasmic sequence… It follows that the phantasm has absolute primacy over the word, that it precedes both utterance and understanding of every linguistic message. Whence two separate and distinct grammars, the first no less important than the second: a grammar of the spoken language and a grammar of phantasmic language.” (5)

To return language to its phantasmal roots is a violation of the laws of grammar and discursive thought as well as the reality principle: words are freed from the drudgery of being useful. Couliano reminds us, “It goes without saying that the phantasm is not only visual or audiovisual: it is, so to say, synesthetic, engendered by the collaboration of several or all senses simultaneously.” (29) What is at stake is a language composed of and addressed to phantasms, rather then language enslaved to semiotic utility, a language that engages as many senses as possible. Fascination with hieroglyphics has been taken up by the avant-garde: Charles Olsen in poetry, Harry
Smith in film and Antonin Artaud in theater. In 1938, the idea of omnisensuous language reappears: “The Theater of Cruelty intends to reassert all the time-tested magical means of capturing the sensibility.” (125) This “pure theatrical language” (124) will consist of intensities of colors, lights, sounds, gestures, words, vibrations, tremors, repetitions, shouts, silences which are “experienced directly by the mind” without being limited by “the barrier of speech” and “the dictatorship of the writer” (124). This intense collusion of senses would “disorganize and pulverize appearances” causing the “elimination of the stage” as the spectacle extends “to the entire hall of the theater”, physically enveloping the spectator (125). This was to achieve nothing less than “the reconquest of the signs of what exists.” (63).

What Bruno called hieroglyphics also reappeared at the birth of psychoanalysis [1895], now in the form of the hysterical symptom. The phantasms, and the natural language which they makes possible, are repressed, locked deep within the prehistory of the body and the mind, but this phantasmic mechanism then breaks free after centuries in the form of the hysterical attack: “We have often compared the hysterical symptomology to picture-writing.” Lacan literally calls them the hieroglyphics of hysteria. Hysterical attacks “are nothing but phantasies projected and translated into motor activities and represented in pantomime.” Hysteria is the return of the repressed phantasm, now sparked by trauma and cultural repression within a suffocating milieu, the language of the gods in a new convulsive, hallucinatory language of paralysis, shrieks and nightmares.

**THE TASTE OF COW CACA**

ATUQ: “I’ll tell you everything, speaking of balls.”
LIC LIC : “Ya.”
ATUQ: “I told you that if you stick a ball in and you’re not concentrating on anything and it sweetens you, you feel good pue, it’s a fact, rather it sweetens you and things continue normal, you can change your ball, stick in another, but if you stick a ball in and especially concentrate so that it advises you if things are
good or things are bad… when you sweeten this doesn’t signify that it will advise you or when it embitters you, this doesn’t signify that it’s going to advise you, but if the ball has the taste of cow caca, and like gum, ya, that’s where you have to take advantage and question the ball, ya, ‘how are things going?’ good or bad, that’s where it will advise you von, when there’s a taste of cow caca.”

LIC LIC: “How do you know the taste of cow caca?”

ATUQ: “It’s very strong von.”

“But how do you know? Jajajajaja!!”

“You’ve never smelt cow caca?”

“I’ve smelt it.”

“But dry…”

“You’ve eaten it?”

“Of course!”

“You’ve eaten it!?!?”

“Dry, the dry cow caca.”

“Why do you eat this?”

“In the country you chew the dry caquita of the cow, ya or you can cook with cow caca.”

“Like wood?”

“Like wood, or you can use the cow caca like fertilizer, ya and this little smell ya, when the coca becomes caca of a cow ya or caca of a donkey that’s where the coca warns you von, chew a little bit of dry cow caca, bite it, ya we haven’t done it pue with you von. Has it ever taken on a taste of caca before?”

“Yes I think so.”

“Aha, that’s where you have to concentrate brother, ya and that’s where the coca advises you von, you understand me? The coca advises you or will advise your brain, I don’t know, but there is a connection in that moment with the animal, with the plant, with the earth and with your brain von, ya and when I come home after having done this, pucta no matter how much I brush [my teeth], my wife, she knows von, she smells von, the breath ya and says to me, ‘My, that’s some strong coca! My, that’s a strong ball,’ she says to me, but she doesn’t always say this to me, she says this when the coca has become caca of a cow and the coca has advised me, ya and that’s where my wife realizes, ya and no matter how much I brush, all that, the smell is so strong, my breath is so strong ya because there is a very strong connection between the plant, the animals, the human, the earth, there’s something divine von, for me von, yes.”
AFTERWORD: The time I got detained

Yesterday I was in the market, woke up late from being stoned with some dreaded hippy rovers the night before, bumbling down to the small corner plaza filled with umbrellas and plastic stools and sandwiches of fried egg, cheese, sweet potato, avocado etc... and drinks in plastic buckets: quinua and apple, soy, chocolate y leche, ponche de avas, etc... and so I’m sitting slumped, dazed and munching when two pelvises appear in my face, dress shirts tucked into jeans and belt-buckles, “¿documentos?” They're asking me for my identity... I see a holstered gun flash beneath a sport jacket. One shows me a card, opening his wallet… policia? I show them my NY license and my Citibank card and my Columbia ID which all have the same name on them. But they want my passport. It's in my room. Come with us. I begin to show annoyance and ask them, “are you ordering me? Do I have a choice? Cause I'd rather not come with you. You guys are dangerous, you kill people.”

“Us? No, No, No... we keep order, we only kill delinquents, thieves and rapists, and won't you be happy when someone tries to rape you gringuito.”

I put up more of a struggle, starting to walk away, when behind me appear three National Police in their dark uniforms: red beret, thick black vest, name in gold, walkie talkie on one hip, handgun in holster on the other, tightbound black boots. I realize I have no choice... they let me finish my ponche de avas. As I take my last sip, the startled woman hands me back my 5 soles piece.... she's not charging me.

Then they bring me to their white pickup. Blazoned in bold red: policia nacional: emergencia. A rifle is lying between the front seats, pointing directly at the person sitting in the middle back seat, which is me. I make a fuss about how I don't want a gun pointed at me, the guy in the front stands the rifle up between his legs. We go to the station near the new giant coliseum built
with mine-money. Out front are statues of all the Inca. I heard they're made of plastic. They sit me down. Make me take out all the things in my pockets. "Check the guitar good." THANK GOD I had no pizza on me. That was one bit of luck. Another bit of good fortune was that thankfully I'd taken all the files off my recorder the night before... so when one of the pigdogs tried to listen, there was nothing there. Otherwise he would have heard the last interview I did with a man from Tambo... which would have fried my story that I'm a dumb gringo, I've only been in Cajamarca 10 days, that, yes, I was at the mobilizations, but that I was only drawn there by curiosity, and that I didn't know the actions were planned (which is true, they were spontaneous!) and that I'm not part of their group, I don't go to their meetings, and that while I recognize some faces I don't know any names... so I told them I really don't think I was participating cause I'm not part of their group, I don't even know what they're group is called.... Another thing, they didn't seem to know that much about me, cause one simple phone call to Celendin would show them that I have been detained before in Peru (one of their questions to which I answered negative, lying, "No, oh no, never."

"And do you use drugs? Why are your eyes so red? Are they always red like that?"

"Yes sir, I mean no sir, I never use drugs sir. Look at my eye, I have an infection, you see that bit of white meat? The doctors in Lima told me it's from the sun, the sun burned my eyes."

Spreading my eye wide with my fingers and showing him my red veiny burned eyeball bulging out of the socket. The slimy rat bastard Fiscal, State prosecutor, comes in with his Fiscal blue vest and his dandruff grease Fiscal hair spiked up, telling me its a delito and they can expel me from the country. He's asking if I want a defense lawyer called in... but thankfully some of the police, whom I'd strategically schmoozed with my babbling idiocy, said that wasn't necessary. They just wanted me to go to my hostel (the pizza!) and bring my passport, to see if I'm really a tourist, and
if I'm here legally (within my visa time limit)... to identify myself. And they keep saying things like, “look if we come to your country we need to identify ourselves no? At least here we don't hit you, we've treated you good gringuito, but there in the Estados Unidos the police would beat us, no?" They bring me to my hostel, I make them pick the rifle up again and put it between the front passenger's legs. At the hostel, the girl behind the glass is shocked. Thankfully they don't follow me into my room, “You're all going to come in?” I ask.

“No, no, no just bring out your passport.”

Back to the police station. They tell me no one will hit me, and I don’t need to declare if I don’t want to, but then all the sudden they’re asking me questions, and typing the answers, even as I try to say, “didn’t you just tell me it's my choice? I'm telling you I don't want to answer anything, I want to go home, I have things to do.”

“Like what?” One young riotready uniformed National policeman asks.

“I have a life too.”

But the middle-aged gentleman transcribing the interrogation is kind, telling me just answer these questions and nothing more will come of it... we'll drop it. He asks me my opinion on the mine. "I'm against it, I love nature, I don't like seeing contamination, and abuse of power, and corruption...." then I ask, “and you?”

“I'm totally against it,” he says in a low voice, gives a glance to his left where the others are, and than shoots his hand out: we shake.

I keep repeating that I was expressing my personal opinion and that I wasn't participating in the protests (which is illegal). That I don't know anyone. That I don't know anything. Making things up wildly: that I was in San Marcos, where I have a girlfriend, and the pigdogs become more interested in hearing about her than anything else. Then I was in Chota, then Bambamarca.
Leaving Celendín out of it as much as possible. Then I was in Lima to see doctors and I ramble on about my eyes and my thumb and my balls... no I didn't participate in any mobilizations!

And then the Fisical and a policeman call me over... "Oh yeah!? Really!? Well then who's this throwing stones in Maden? Must be your double?" I pretend not to know, until they show me the video, from a rooftop, me throwing one measly pebble, lands in a puddle splashing mud on a compañero. I tell them laughing, “It's just one stone! It was symbolic! I was caught up in the excitement of it all!” They bring out printed photos of me in sombrero, leopardprint glasses, black and yellow psychedelic lightning sweater, beard and long hair, playing guitar... in large red letters it reads “SECRETO” above and below the photos…. They tell me they also have photos of me holding a sign in the mobilization that night...

“Did you write it?”
“Yes.”
“What did it say?”
“WATER IS SACRED,” I tell them.

After blackening my index finger with ink, giving my print next to my signed name on what seemed an endless series of documents, they brought me to a doctor, to prove they hadn't beaten me. I joke with them, figuring it's better if they like me. I tell them I thought I had more money than what they gave me back.

“How much?”
“200 soles.”
“Jajajajajajaj.”

One policeman says, “is this yours too?” extending his wallet to me. Then I say, “It’s fine if you bring me to a doctor, but what if you beat me afterwards? After he gives his inspection?”

“Jajajajajajaja.”
“Were you following me this morning?”
“Yes, we were.”
“You like that white ass, don't you?”
“Jajajajajajaja.”
“What's one ball say to the other ball?”
“What?”
“Better come and listen for your self,” and I grab one of their heads and shove it down toward my crotch.
“Jajajajajajajajajajaj!”

I tell the doctor I don't need to be inspected, they haven't hit me. Otherwise I would have had to get completely naked and spin around. First the top, then the bottom. The policeman told me to tell the doctor that I'm an Anthropologist from Columbia University... so I don't need to be inspected. He also told the other cops that, whispering, repeating what I'd told him, “He's a student in one of the best universities in the Estados Unidos!” Idiots!

As they were driving me back to my hostel, I see Jesus, one of the hippy rovers, so I jump out saying, “I see a friend…” Bye bye pigdogs. I tell Jesus, “from 11am till 3pm they had me detained.” We go off to my room to burn whatever evidence remains...

I met Jesus the night of the paro\textsuperscript{375}, during a vigil in the Plaza de Armas, in front of the San Francisco church... there were candles burning on the pavement, signs taped up on the metal spear tipped fence, paper and markers laid out for more sign making, speakers blasting the anthem, ¡Agua Si, Oro No! This was a vigil in solidarity with the people of Tambo, Guardians of the Lagos whose camp was destroyed by the police the night before. At one point Jesus picked up the mic and was rapping against the System and for Nature. I noticed Jesus when he wrote a sign, “Our history is our present”. Then all the sudden we were marching, blocking the road, the cars shrill honking behind us, chanting arengas\textsuperscript{376} with our candles and signs, “¡Two by Two!” cause that signals 'order'. We were pretty meager.... maybe 40 people... until we got to the Quinde\textsuperscript{377} and crossed paths with about 200 campesinos from Tambo who had just come down to Cajamarca in freight trucks after being chased by the police through the mountains all day and night. Now we had no problem blocking the whole road, and the cars let up their honking. Ecstatically I ran up
and down the long line of 2X2 tired, dirty, but determined poncho y sombrero wearing campesinos, greeting familiar faces, clasping hands, taking pictures, chanting and hooting in joy. We marched back to the Plaza de Armas, which we also blocked, sitting down in the road, stopping traffic, and Manuel Ramos Campos informed us, amid flashing news cameras and microphones held out under his chin, that the Guardians had been attacked last night by the police, the camp destroyed: the plastics, the blankets, the food, all burned. There are some wounded by rubber bullets and some in shock from tear gas.

That morning the paro had started totally spontaneously! Holy shit! We met in the Arc de Triunfo. It was a mobilization planned in solidarity with the Guardians of Bambamarca. Wilfredo Saavedra was there, El presidente del Frente de Defensa Ambiental de Cajamarca, who apparently was in prison for 10 years for crimes of terrorism, accused of being part of Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru.

People are anxious, an old rondero calling out, interrupting, “We need to go up there! ¡Arriba! That's where the fight will be determined, not here in the city, while we discuss and discuss... we're losing time.”

Another man saying, “We each need to hold meetings, each base needs to hold its own meeting, the bases need to organize themselves.”

A young man begins, “In 2011 when the paro started…” but the old rondero yells out, “This is not the time for History class!”

Another old man takes my guitar out of my hand, saying it needs to be tuned, he's a maestro, fingers fluttering up and down the neck... his daughter encourages him to sing one of his coplas,

Oiga chocho Valdez
por que quieres destruir las aguas
animal como una res

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Listen chocho Valdez
why do you want to destroy the waters
animal like a cow.

(I recounted this copla to my friend Atuq and he was displeased, “why does he have to go insulting the cow?”)

Then we’re off... someone says we're headed to Maden, the road for Bambamarca. Walking, walking, then all the sudden, men and women are throwing stones in the road. Small stones, large stones, the splash of a pebble. All taken from a nearby pile of rubble, and three people tumbling irregular boulders, mud slouching as one flops over on its side... within moments the road is blocked and a pole is jammed in the rocks with a Peruvian flag that reads CONGA NO VA CA-RAJO! A rondera in red sweater, skirt, and sombrero breaks the rear windshield of a mototaxi with her fuete379 as it passes the blockade. Man gets out yelling and a woman rushes over with a baby also yelling. A young girl is crying, sobbing scared. The man is saying he had permission to pass. The rondera is stone faced: no one passes. All she says is, “respect.” We run up the road a few hundred meters and make another blockade with stones, then go back down to our first rock-pile. Heavy machinery on trailers, miner transport buses and pickup trucks, all use this road to travel between the mines and Cajamarca... but now the movement is suspended. Mobs of miners are walking past us, their travel bags in their arms, deadfaced, blank and neutral, refusing to see anything the best they can... or with embarrassed, almost-ashamed smiles. Then the police show up, more and more until there are twice the number of them than us. We really only had about 20 dedicated people, and a lot of neighbors who were watching from their doorways and windows... some with us but not all... many were confused as to what was happening. I heard one man mutter that we were from the mine... I tried to explain to whoever I could that this was an action in solidarity with the Guardians of Bambamarca whose camp had been destroyed by the police last night.
The riot police march up, making a wall of shields of small attractive sad looking womencops and the men came up behind with teargas strapped to their vests, those funny red berets and rifles in their hands... moving the stones out of the road. People laugh at the cops as they struggle to move the boulders, and it flops, splashing all over them, “HeeeeyyyyyY!!” One large psycho loaded his shotgun right in front of us. Then a commander lets out an ugly sick bleat, “Every 5 meters!” for the womencops to spread out more... along the sides of the road now... as the traffic resumes. The commander sees me and points, “¿and him?” asking another pigdog and comes up asking for my identity... but I duck behind the people and he lets it go.

Our women begin heckling, first the men cops then the women cops then the men cops again... “Don't you drink water?”

“Oh you poor *chinita*, why do you let these beasts boss you around?”

“Oh they must be letting gays in the police now? We know what you did to enter the service!”

As we slip away... now our *dirigentes* are disappearing into the crowd... one of us yells, “Every 5 meters!” mocking the commander, and people bend down unnoticed picking up stones as the miner buses pass… BANG! DING!…

“No wait wait, not here, there are cameras… Ok let it go!”

CRASH!

We marched up to the *Plaza de Armas*, a small group, calling through the streets, “¿QUE DICE TU CONCIENCIA? ¡CONGA NO VA!” our megaphone sounding with a blast and echoing off the walls. Jesus was there, drawing large luminous butterflies on the sidewalk with chalk, a cup out for change, scrawled “*tengo hambre.*” Without a seconds thought, he joined up with us.
One year later I returned to Peru and was denied entry to the country. The screen started flashing red at immigration. “Prohibited from entrance for acts against State security and public order.” 14 hours of waiting around the airport with three young chaperones watching me. They gave me no food. I read *The Good Soldier Svejk* and found surprising resonances with my present dilemma. Then they put me on the first plane back to New York.

**SVEJK AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS**

“Take that idiotic expression off your face.”

“I can’t help it,” replied Svejk solemnly. “I was discharged from the army for idiocy and officially certified by a special commission as an idiot. I’m an official idiot.” (20)


Amanecer is a Spanish verb meaning ‘to dawn’ and is used idiomatically to refer to ‘waking up.’ To the best of my knowledge, these are the lyrics from one of the yaravis I heard being sung that morning. Yaravi is an Andean music genre whose antecedents have traced to the Harawi, an Incan musical and poetic tradition.

Handmade tents of blue plastic tarp, queñual branches and string.

Nearly all the songs I heard in Cajamarca are composed in couplets but I am including only one line for the sake of brevity. The ‘cha’ ending on ‘Mamacha’ and ‘Mamachita’ is the diminutive form in Quechua, similar to ‘ita’ or ‘ito’ in Spanish. Daniel mixes these two diminutive forms in ‘Mamachita’.

Andean cultures are famous for their principle of ‘complementary dualism’ or ‘yanantin’.

Fantastic as it may seem, this story appears to have a basis in so-called ‘reality.’ The documentary Open Pit reveals that Yanacocha dismisses their workers at any moment, when the worker gets a work-related illness for example. “The worker comes in healthy, checked with a medical exam and after three, four, seven, eight years they discard him like a tool that ya is useless no?” “The worker feels totally threatened with fear, no? Even…to have a check-up…why? Because if the company knows that the señor has an illness, they will throw him away.” Near the film’s end, we encounter another horrific scene. Thousands of documents cover the ground in a warehouse. We discover that “Yanacocha… had begun to destroy years of documentation. We needed to find out what was in that warehouse, we had to be fast and look quietly hoping not to be seen... the documents confirmed that Yanacocha workers are in fact suffering from mercury poisoning ... well above the values legally permitted.”

‘papa’ is Quechua for potato

‘pukio’ and ‘huaico’ are Quechua


Silverblatt, p. 194.


The Green Moon is the New Moon. It’s called green in the sense that it is unripe, like green fruit.

mitayos: Mit’a is a Quechua word referring to mandatory public service in the Inca Empire. Historians use the hispanicized term mita to differentiate the system as it was modified and intensified by the Spanish colonial government, creating the encomienda system.

In December, 2013 Yanacocha delivered 150 laptops with big colored ribbons to 46 educational institutions in 28 villages in the districts of Cajamarca, Baños del Inca and Encañada. The people marveled, “This is something that strengthens us as teachers and encourages children to progress in terms of new technology since there is backwardness in the rural areas as regards computer skills.” “I think this is really beneficial for our children; we do need it in the country so we can gain more knowledge.” “Our children cannot be left outside this progress; the company’s support is very important.” “It will serve to form good professionals in our country.” “Before they knew nothing and now they are going to learn.” La http://larepublica.pe/27-12-2013/yanacocha-dona-150-laptops-a-46-instituciones-educativas-de-28-caseros


21 Gerardo Fernández Juárez, *El banquete aymara: mesas y yatiris*, p. 20

22 Gerardo Fernández Juárez, *El banquete aymara: mesas y yatiris*, p.30

23 Gerardo Fernández Juárez, *El banquete aymara: mesas y yatiris*, p.131

24 Galindo, *In Search of An Inca*, p. 102

25 “Latin America has come through two long decades of neoliberalism, which has to a large degree been funded by aggressive extractivism of the region’s rich natural resources – carried out mainly by transnational corporations (Bury, 2007: 49). The impact has been profound – in general the neoliberal agenda has meant a decrease in support for healthcare, education and social services and a shrinking of the state, which has led to an increase in income inequality, unemployment and poverty (Larrain, 2000: 172-173). In the early 1990s, as Peru was still recovering from decades of internal terrorism and the financial crisis that had just engulfed the region, the then president Alberto Fujimori took the opportunity to embrace neoliberalism with vigour (Bury, 2005). Under Fujimori’s tenure Peru was rapidly subjected to a range of neoliberal ‘reform’ measures, including a privatisation programme which considerably favoured the investment of foreign capital in Peru (Peru Support Group [PSG], 2005). These reforms were enforced through authoritarian repression and human rights abuses carried out by a military death squad. In April 2009, the former president was sentenced by Peru’s Supreme Court to twenty-five years imprisonment for ‘murder, aggravated kidnapping and battery, as well as crimes against humanity’ (Romero, 2009). Fujimori was the world’s first ex-president to be convicted of crimes committed while in office (Guardian, 2013) which reflects the level of graft and corruption which characterised his period in office.” “Getting to the Bottom of Extractive Capitalism: A Case Study of Open Pit Mining in Cajamarca, Peru” by Lynda Sullivan. *Finding the ‘Historically Possible’: Contexts, Limits and Possibilities in Development Education*, Autumn 2014, Issue no.19. http://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue19-perspectives4?page=show


27 Yanacocha means ‘Black Lagoon’ in Quechua.


31 Open Pit Documentary. Written and directed by Gianni Converso and Daniel Santana. (http://vimeo.com/50059350)


35 Mirtha Vásquez Chuquilín, Criminalización de la protesta en Perú: un análisis a la luz del caso Conga de Cajamarca. GRUFIDES, 2013.


38 The EIA consists of 17,000 pages and is in a technical language that the campesinos cannot hope to understand. In the list of 41 professionals in the system of external evaluators from the Ministry of Energy and Mines, there exists not one hydrologist. Each external consultant has only 15 days to review the voluminous EIA. Provincial municipalities and districts that are inside the scope of the Conga mining project have less than 9 days to present their respective observations to the second modification of the EIA.


41 Los Limites de la expansion minera en el Peru, SER, 2013

42 Los Limites de la expansion minera en el Peru, SER, 2013

43 These last three paragraphs come from an article by my good friend Lynda Sullivan, with whom I lived and struggled alongside for the entirety of my time in Cajamarca. I believe that all knowledge, and espe-

HUNGER:

“Hungry clouds swag on the deep.” —William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

“If I have a taste, it is only / For the earth and stones. / I always feed on air, / Rocks, coal, and iron. / Hungers of mine, move about. / Eat the bran of the meadow. / Suck the gay venom / Of the bindweed. / Eat the pebbles that are broken, / The old stones of churches; / The gravel of old floods, / Bread scattered in gray valleys. / The wolf cried under the leaves / As he spat out the fine feathers / Of his meal of fowl: / Like him I consume myself.” —Rimbaud, *Hunger*

“Hunger, thirst, yells, dance, dance, dance, dance!” —Arthur Rimbaud, *A Season in Hell*

“The great health— that one does not merely have but also acquires continually, and must acquire because one gives it up again and again, and must give it up.” —Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*

“A world so over rich in what is beautiful, strange, questionable, terrible, and divine that our curiosity as well as our craving to possess it has got beside itself— alas, now nothing will sate us any more! After such vistas and with such a burning hunger in our conscience and science, how could we still be satisfied with *present-day man*? — Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*

“There are hours when Ariadne’s thread is broken: I am nothing but empty irritation; I no longer know what I am; I am hungry, cold and thirsty.” —Georges Bataille, *Inner Experience*

“Quaffing nectar at mess with gods, golden dishes, all ambrosial. Not like a tanner lunch we have, boiled mutton, carrots and turnips, bottle of Allsop. Nectar, imagine it drinking electricity: gods' food.” — James Joyce, *Ulysses*

“Never before, when it is life itself that is in question, has there been so much talk of civilization and culture. And there is a curious parallel between this generalized collapse of life at the root of our present demoralization and our concern for a culture which has never been coincident with life, which in fact has been devised to tyrannize over life.

Before speaking further about culture, I must remark that the world is hungry and not concerned with culture, and that the attempt to orient toward culture thoughts turned only toward hunger is a purely artificial expedient.

What is most important, it seems to me, is not so much to defend a culture whose existence has never kept a man from going hungry, as to extract, from what is called culture, ideas whose compelling force is identical with that of hunger.

We need to live first of all; to believe in what makes us live and that something makes us live – to believe that whatever is produced from the mysterious depths of ourselves need not forever haunt us as an exclusively digestive concern.

I mean that if it is important for us to eat first of all, it is even more important for us not to waste in the sole concern for eating our simple power of being hungry.” — Artaud, *The Theater and Its Double*
The etymology of Cajamarca may mean 'town of thorns' or 'cold place' depending on the source. All sources agree that the word has Quechua origin.

According to Nobel Literature Laureate Mario Vargas Llosa, Ollanta “saved democracy” by keeping the former president’s daughter, Keiko Fujimori, from being elected, though Vargas Llosa also said choosing between Ollanta and Keiko was like choosing between AIDS and cancer.


“It’s a chance for Europe to awaken”, New Statesman. Slavoj Žižek, JULY, 6 2015.
Perhaps the notion of the Spanish eating gold fed into the idea of the Spanish as gods or *viracochas*.

About an Aymara speaking people of Bolivia, writes Olivia Harris, “In Laymi thought the metaphor used to represent libation, sacrifice, and other ritual offerings is not exchange: rather it is feeding. Humans must feed the sacred beings so that they will in turn provide food for human society.” “Sources and Meanings of Money” in *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes: At the Crossroads of History and Anthropology*, p.310

It is interesting to see the similarities in beliefs found throughout the Andes: “Pachamama in Laymi religious classification belongs primarily to the domain of the devils (although there is ambiguity, as the association with the Virgin indicates). Today in northern Potosí and elsewhere in the Aymara world, the concept of devil (known variously as *yawlu*, *saxra*, *supay*, and *wak’a*) includes a whole spectrum of sacred beings: the mountains; the dead; powerful, untamed places such as gullies and waterfalls; and shrines where lightning has struck and killed an animal or human being; as well as the tío and the Pachamama. The defining character of these devils is not so much evil or malice as abundance, chaos, and hunger. Humans enter into and maintain a relationship with them by offering them food, whether a full sacrifice of blood (*wilani*) or merely coca leaf, cigarettes, and libations. In return, the devils may give unprecedented fortune, or adequately prosperity, or they may ‘eat’ their worshipers, making them ill or even die, if their own hunger—manifested by the ever-gaping mouth of the tío in the underground corridors of the mines—is not satisfied. The devils are the source both of fertility and wealth and of sickness, misfortune, and death. They are unpredictable and very powerful.” Olivia Harris, “Sources and Meanings of Money,” in *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes*, p. 312

“In Mexico, Cortes told the Aztecs that he and his men suffered from a disease of the heart which is only cured by gold.” Michael Wood, *Conquistadors*, p. 11

The unnaturalness of money (as an end in itself) has long historical antecedents in European thought: “Aristotle in the *Politics* wrote of self-sufficiency as the perfect state: there was a ‘natural’ (*oikonomike*) use of money which satisfied wants, but there was also an ‘unnatural’ (*chrematistike*) use, in which obtaining wealth was an end in itself. It was on the basis of Aristotle’s formulation that Thomist law and the medieval church banned usury.” Olivia Harris, “Sources and Meanings of Money,” in *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes*, p. 302


What Bataille says about the Sun goes equally for Gold (the two correspond in Incan cosmology): “The sun, from the human point of view…is the most *elevated* conception. It is the most abstract object, since it is impossible to look at it fixedly”. But if one “obstinately focuses” on the Sun, “a certain madness is implied, and the notion changes meaning because it is no longer production that appears in light, but refuse or combustion…in practice the scrutinized sun can be identified with a mental ejaculation, foam on the lips, and an epileptic crisis.” Just as the Sun not looked at is “perfectly beautiful, the one that is scrutinized can be considered horribly ugly.” He gives the examples from mythology of Mithra, Prometheus and Icarus, as well as the sacrifice of a bull and the cock whose “particularly solar cry always approximates the screams of a slaughter. One might add that the sun has always been mythologically expressed by a man slashing his
own throat, as well as by an anthropomorphic being deprived of a head.” In the Andes, the Sun has this double meaning, elevation and combustion (or sacrifice) and since Gold and Sun correspond, it is true of Gold as well: “All this leads one to say that the summit of elevation is in practice confused with a sudden fall of unheard-of violence.” (“Rotten Sun”, Visions of Excess, p.58) Bataille was consumed by “the search for that which most ruptures the highest elevation”, by means of unrelenting obsession with the base in all its formlessness and chaos. Let’s connect this doubleness, the oppressive civilized meaning and the repressed primitive meaning, to the doubleness of the mouth: “it is the most living part, in other words, the most terrifying for neighboring animals… Among civilized men, the mouth has even lost the relatively prominent character that it still has among primitive men. However, the violent meaning of the mouth is conserved in a latent state: it suddenly regains the upper hand with a literally cannibalistic expression such as mouth of fire [bouche à feu], applied to the cannons men use to kill each other. And on important occasions human life is still bestially concentrated in the mouth: rage makes men grind their teeth, while terror and atrocious suffering turn the mouth into the organ of rending screams.” (“Mouth”, Visions of Excess, p. 59)

65 This doubleness of gold, comprising both the highest ideals and the lowest vulgar materialism is perhaps why Michael Taussig characterizes it as a transgressive substance.

66 The Inca used gold for ornaments, decorating their palaces, temples, shrines and images of gods as well as for personal jewelry. “The grandeur of the [Temple of the Sun] was so incredible that I would not dare to describe it, if it were not for the fact that all the Spanish historians of Peru have already done so. But neither what they have said nor what I will say will ever be able to capture the significance of what it was… The image of the Sun was so large it filled the front of the temple from wall to wall. … After drawing lots, the image fell to a noble conquistador, named Mancio Serra de Leguizamo, whom I knew, a big gambler, who… bet it and lost it in a single night.” [Garcilaso [1609] 1959, I: 263-64)(Silverblatt xvii)

67 “Various studies have demonstrated the link between mining activities and poverty. This is called the ‘resource curse’ or ‘the poor farmer on his golden throne’; a country that is rich in resources often remains poor. In this case, the reason is that 98.3% of the mining companies’ profits flow to the North, while only 1.7% remains in Peru, where the government takes most of it: hardly anything flows back to the local population. In order to maintain this mechanism and to ensure future investments by European companies in similar projects, the Peruvian government recently signed a free trade agreement with the EU, which came into effect on the 1st of March 2013. This is colonialism all over again. Gold (and other resources) are taken from the South and shipped North, while the local population remains poor and is left to deal with the negative consequences.” (“Stranger than Fiction: the Conga Mining Project”, GOUD:EERLIJK?) http://goudeerlijk.be/2013/05/stranger-than-fiction-the-conga-mining-project/

68 Tristan Platt, ‘Ethnic Calendars and Market Interventions among the Ayllus of Lipes during the Nineteenth Century,’ In Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes, p. 259


70 From Felipe Guaman Poma De Ayala, “The First New Chronicle and Good Government” [1615-1616]

71 Brown, Life Against Death, p. 287
Erich Fromm drew the connection between “Freud’s anal character—— with its orderliness, parsimony, and obstinacy—— and the sociological type of the capitalist as delineated by Sombart and Max Weber.” (Brown, p. 203)

Brown, *Life Against Death*, p. 206

Brown, *Life Against Death*, p.206

Brown, *Life Against Death*, p.208

Brown, *Life Against Death*, p.208

Brown, *Life Against Death*, p.208

Brown, *Life Against Death*, p.208

Brown, *Life Against Death*, p.211-212

“For civilized man the crucial defense mechanism is sublimation… [which is] the desexualization of sexual energy by its redirection toward new objects… desexualization means disembodiment. New objects must substitute for the human body, and there is no sublimation without the projection of the human body into things; the dehumanization of man is his alienation of his own body. He thus acquires a soul (the higher spirituality of sublimation), but the soul is located in things. Money is “the world’s soul.” And gold is the proper symbol of sublimation, both as the death of the body and as the quest for a ‘higher’ life which is not that of the body.”

“The alienated consciousness is correlative with a money economy. Its root is the compulsion to work. This compulsion to work subordinates man to things, producing at the same time confusion in the valuation of things and devaluation of the human body. It reduces the drives of the human being to greed and competition (aggression and possessiveness, as in the anal character). The desire for money takes the place of all genuinely human needs. Thus the apparent accumulation of wealth is really the impoverishment of human nature, and its appropriate morality is the renunciation of human nature and desires—— asceticism. The effect is to substitute an abstraction, *Homo economicus*, for the concrete totality of human nature, and thus to dehumanize human nature. In this dehumanized human nature man loses contact with his own body, more specifically with his senses, with sensuality and with the pleasure-principle. And this dehumanized human nature produces an inhuman consciousness, whose only currency is abstractions divorced from real life—— the industrious, coolly rational, economic, prosaic mind. Capitalism has made us so stupid and one-sided that objects exist for us only if we can possess them or if they have utility.” (Norman O Brown, *Life Against Death*, p. 237-238)

“In the Aymara spoken by the ayllus of Northern Potosi, the word for debt is the same as that for manure (*wanu*), whose Spanish rendering, guano, has become synonymous with the nitrate rich deposits of bird droppings along the Pacific coast. I do not think this association is a mere homonym, since a similar conclusion can be drawn from Bertonio’s glosses for ‘debt’ and ‘loan,’ both rendered in Aymara as *manu*. The Spanish *logro*, which can mean both profit and interest, is also translated by Bertonio as *manusitha*, with *mirani chasitha* as an alternative gloss. This second root, *mira*, means not only profit or interest but also increase (*multiplico*). *Mira marmi*, for example, means a fertile woman, and *miracatha* is translated as ‘the multiplication of money producing a profit.” Furthermore, a synonym for *miracatha* is *hamacatha*, whose root, *hama*, means manure… In the metaphorical association of debt and credit with manure we can detect a vision of circulation itself—— or rather delayed circulation—— as a fertilizing force.” Olivia Harris, “Sources and Meanings of Money”, in *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes*. p. 309.
82 ‘Pishtaco’ derives from the Quechua word "pishtay" which means to "behead, cut the throat, or cut into slices"

83 ‘Nakaq’ is Quechua for murderer; killer; butcher


“Melted fat taken from the body of a dead Indian was then used to soothe the raw wound.” Albert Marrin


93 Jesuit Father Pablo Joseph de Arriaga writes in his book *The Extermination of Idolatry in Peru* (1621), "In Parquín, before the visitor Hernando de Avendaño went there, they made a sacrifice to burn his soul, as they put it. They make a small lump or figurine out of fat and then burn it. They say they do this in order to burn the soul of the judge or other person whose soul they want to destroy. Their phrase for it is that he will become mad or lose his reason and sensibility. This is done in a particular way, for if the soul they are to burn is Spanish, the figurine to be burned must be made out of pork fat. Viracocha, they say, does not eat llama fat. But if an Indian's soul is to be burned, they use a different fat, mixed with corn flour. When the
soul is Spanish they use wheat flour. This trick, or sacrifice, is used on many occasions, and they use it against people they are afraid of, such as corregidors, visitors, and the like. The rite is called caruayquispina, and it is performed even today where these persons are expected to pass to keep them from reaching the town, and so forth.” p. 44. The footnote for caruayquispina reads, “Carua, a word unknown in the glossaries, is perhaps equivalent to a human figure or doll. Quespina is equivalent to guard, remedy, or defense, and, by extension, refuge. Perhaps with this sacrifice they warded off or defended themselves against the harm they expected to receive from the persons who were the object of the charm.”


95 The currency of Peru is called ‘nuevos soles’ or ‘new suns’, which again marks the transformation of value from Gold as Taytay Inti [Father Sun] of the Inca to Gold as capital for the Spanish.


98 “Writing this book in which I was saying that energy finally can only be wasted, I myself was using my energy, my time, working; my research answered in a fundamental way the desire to add to the amount of wealth acquired for mankind. Should I say that under these conditions I sometimes could only respond to the truth of my book and could not go on writing it?” *The Accursed Share*, p. 11.

99 Deleuze, *Desert Islands*, p. 141

100 My committee suggested that I include a discussion of translation, seeing as how my dissertation relies heavily on translation to ‘show’, rather than ‘tell about’, peasant experience and in this way to create an experience for the reader. Odi Gonzales pointed out that, while peasants in Cajamarca may not speak Quechua, nevertheless Quechua grammar continues to reside within their Spanish. Daniel drew attention to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. That peasant experience is entangled with their wealth of oral culture seem obvious to me. In order to pass this experience onto the reader, through the lightening bolt of communication (Bataille), or what John Pemberton referred to as "language as contagion", I estranged English by including grammars, words and phrases from Quechua and Spanish. I want the reader to feel immersed in a foreign world, which was my experience of fieldwork, and therefore I could not translate into straightforward English. This calls for play and for experiment, a translation that cross-pollinates between the resources of English, Spanish and Quechua. Daniella Gandolfo thought this was a way of staying true to, and mediating between, these three languages, and explains why transcription of recorded conversations was such a crucial part of my process (from fieldwork to text). Mick Taussig suggested offering two different translations of the same transcription, one geared towards the Anglo reader and the other geared towards the Spanish reader. Walking the reader through this exercise early on in the dissertation would attune him or her to the possibilities and risks of different translations. Ideally, I would like to have more nuanced translations that distinguish between the Spanish spoken by rural peasants and that spoken by educated urban residents.

Another idea is to discuss translation as a philosophy of how one relates to the Other, one which emphasizes estrangement and rather than assimilation. In the "The Task of the Translator", Benjamin quotes
Goethe: “The fundamental error of the translator is that he holds fast to the state in which his own language happens to be rather than allowing it to be put powerfully in movement by the foreign language...where image tone meld into one he must broaden and deepen his own language through the foreign one, we have no notion how far this is possible” (Illuminations. p. 81) For Arguedas, communication with Nature is entirely bound up with Quechua, a language which existed before the fall of signification. He believed that Quechua allows for the matter of things to slip into words. Arguedas’ Spanish is Quechua-fied, he estranges Spanish to retain the feeling of Quechua. He would argue that Quechua is more connected to the world because of its onomatopoeia and its sensitivity to intersubjective relationships. It is able to contain more of the material world, in a way that Spanish can not. As Arguedas writes in his introduction to his translation of some Quechua songs: “Those that speak this language know that Kechwa goes beyond Spanish in the expression of some sentiments that most characterize the indigenous heart: tenderness, affection, the love of nature.” In Foxes, he writes, “How weak is the word when one is despirited. When the mind is full of all that we learn through our senses, the word is also filled with that material. And how it vibrates!” (12)

101 This idea comes from Walter Benjamin. Joyce called it ‘paralysis.’


103 “It seems to me... that the fundamental question is posed only from that moment on, when no formula is possible, when we listen in silence to the absurdity of the world.” (Georges Bataille, “The Consequences of Nonknowledge”, in The Unfinished System Of Nonknowledge. p. 113)

104 These lines come from Bataille’s Inner Experience, but I’d like to point to a resonance within Peruvian social theory. José Carlos Mariátegui, Marxist and founder of socialism in Peru, opens his widely influential Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality (1928) with a quote from Nietzsche: “never again to read an author of whom it is apparent that he wanted to produce a book: but only those whose thoughts unintentionally became a book.” He then goes on to claim that, “I am summoned by an imperious force”, “My thought and my life are one process” and “I am far removed from the academic techniques of the university.”

105 “the companion, the reader who acts upon me is discourse. Or yet still: the reader is discourse—it is he who speaks in me, who maintains in me the discourse intended for him. And no doubt, discourse is project, but even more than this it is that other, the reader, who loves me and who already forgets me (kills me), without whose present insistence I could do nothing, would have no inner experience. Not that in moments of violence—of misfortune—I don’t forget him, as he himself forgets me—but I tolerate in me the action of project in that it is a link with this obscure other sharing my anguish, my torment, desiring my torment as much as I desire his.” Georges Bataille, Inner Experience, p. 60-61.


107 The Gay Science. p. 300. Like a good anthropologist Nietzsche takes his explanation from the street.

108 Psychology and the critique of the elements of consciousness.

109 “Life is never situated at a particular point: it passes rapidly from one point to another (or from multiple points to other points), like a current or like a sort of streaming of electricity…your life is not limited to that ungraspable inner streaming; it streams to the outside as well and opens itself incessantly to what flows out or surges forth towards it. The lasting vortex which constitutes you runs up against similar vortices with which it forms a vast figure, animated by a measured agitation. Now to live signifies for you not only
the flux and the fleeting play of light which are united in you, but the passage of warmth or of light from one being to another, from you to your fellow being or from your fellow being to you (even at the moment when you read in me the contagion of my fever which reaches you): words, books, monuments, symbols, laughter are only so many paths of this contagion, of this passage. Individual beings matter little and enclose points of view which cannot be acknowledged, if one considers what is animated, passing from one to the other in love, in tragic scenes, in movements of fervor. Thus we are nothing, neither you nor I, beside burning words which could pass from me to you, imprinted on a page.” Georges Bataille, *Inner Experience*. p. 94.

110 “Experience attains in the end the fusion of object and subject, being as subject non-knowledge, as object the unknown.” Georges Bataille, *Inner Experience*, p.9.

111 “Socratic College”, *The Unfinished System of Nonknowledge*, p. 16

112 *Guilty*, p. 129

113 Derrida would say “Any other is totally other [Tout autre est tout autre]” which I take to mean an other person, an other culture, and also other selves. We should also include as other Bataille’s entire list of social heterogeneity in “The Psychological Structure of Fascism”, *Visions of Excess*.

114 “You must, then, abandon yourself to your destiny or, more exactly, accept that it lead you to your glory. This anguish which wounds you— it is necessary that it tear you apart even more so that you communicate it to your fellow beings. You must go to the public square and shout it out as it is, you must shout it out to your fellow being. The latter must learn from you that thirst for blood which is manifested by no one in isolation: the anguish which is communicated, in the darkness, from one to the other, demands that blood flow; the shared desire to emerge from the circle of solitude which leaves one barren, to negate egoism without light, demands that a victim be chosen to die. Desire chooses, if possible, one whom divine seduction designated: it will designate you if you are king.” Georges Bataille, *Inner Experience*. p.195.

115 *Qhapaq Ñan* (beautiful road) is the name of the Great Inca Road running throughout Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Columbia, Ecuador and Peru.

116 It is common for people to drop the ‘t’ on Newmont as the anglo-pronunciation escapes most Spanish speakers.

117 Arana, Marco. “LA DEFENSA DEL CERRO QUILISH ¿UNA CUESTION ROMANTICA?”


119 Marco Arana, ”EL CERRO QUILISH Y LA MINERIA DEL ORO EN CAJAMARCA” http://cajaromar.de/mine/quilish.htm

120 Galindo reveals the history of what it means to be mestizo in Peru: “children of the conquest…deemed ‘natural children’ or bastards, mestizos not only lacked a trade but in fact could not practice one… one colonial official called them ‘men of destroyed lives,’… For them, identity was an unbearably distressing matter.” (29) and this “For their mothers, this first generation of mestizos conveyed the memory of defeat as well as disdain due to their supposed rape.” (29)
Fabiana continues: “I use the term indigeneity recognizing the complex politics of class, language, ethnicity and race in Peru. First of all, the term indigenous is not used by people in rural Cajamarca (who tend to refer to themselves as campesinos). Also, I do not mean to suggest that people are more or less indigenous based on a set of prescribed characteristics (e.g., language or dress). As scholars have pointed out, we need to ‘move beyond thinking of indigeneity in the all-or-nothing terms of authenticity and invention, cultural survival and extinction’ (see Garcia 2005:6).”

“Quilish’s identity as an Apu challenged any arguments that justified mining activity based on economic calculations about the utilitarian value of resources. The fact that Quilish was an Apu made it incommensurable, in the sense that it was irreducible to gold or other forms of material benefits. The question ceased to be, How can Cerro Quilish be mined responsibly? (as the problem is often framed by corporations promoting an image of "Corporate Social Responsibility"); nor could the dispute be described simply as a disagreement over how communities would "benefit" from the project.” Li, Fabiana. “Relating Divergent Worlds: Mines, Aquifers and Sacred Mountains in Peru” Anthropologica 55.2 (2013): 399-411.


Li, p. 399


While Eriberto told me Isidro Llanos was murdered in this way, the documentary ‘Operacion Diablo,’ claims it was Esmundo Becerra Cotrina. These sots of confusions are extremely common in conversations, and I believe fundamental to communication itself.

See the documentary Operación Diablo.

Derogatory name for a cop.

“The Andean utopia was… an attempt to reverse dependency and fragmentation, to search for an alternative path in the encounter between memory and the imaginary: the rebuilding of the Inca society and the return of the Inca ruler. It was an effort to find in the reconstruction of the past a solution to their identity problems… There is a predisposition to think in terms of la langue durée. The past weighs on the present, and neither the right nor the left is free of its grip.” (Galindo, In Search of an Inca, p. 5.)

According to Fray Bernardino Izaguirre, Misiones franciscanas, (Lima: Talleres Gráficos de la Penitenciaria, 1928) Juan Santos Atahualpa believed, “the Spaniards’ time has run out and his time has arrived.” Galindo continues, “Time was up— one age ended and another one began.” (In Search of an Inca, p. 36.)

“the name inspired by the jolts and convulsions that followers of this salvation movement experienced” (Galindo, In Search of an Inca, p. 25.)
Atahualpa’s cell, known as the Ransom Room, is still preserved in Cajamarca.


Sumak Kawsay—Quechua for “good living.” Throughout South America, it is a way of living in harmony within communities, ourselves, and most importantly, nature. In Cajamarca, the concept of Sumak Kawsay is popularly referred to as “convivencia” or “coexistence.” “More recently, sumak kawsay has been incorporated into Ecuadorian and Bolivian governments as a way of granting rights to nature. The concept of sumak kawsay was incorporated into Ecuador’s 2008 Constitution, which was the first country to legally acknowledge rights of nature.” https://www.pachamama.org/sumak-kawsay

Ayni—Quechua for “reciprocity.”

Yanantin—Quechua for “complementary dualism.”

Uyway—A Quechua word meaning, “mutual relations of care among human and other-than-human beings.” (De la Cadena, p. 356)


Galindo, In Search of an Inca, p. 182.

José Carlos Mariátegui, El alma matinal (Lima: Amauta, 1959), 22. (In: Galindo, p.182)

Upon accepting the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega prize in 1968.

pacha (world, time and space, or state of being) and cuti (change, turn, or something that comes back to itself).
“through revolution, Canas y Canchis peasants projected their customary carnival ritual battles into the whole society and even the entire cosmos.” (Galindo, p. 102)

Luna: “Bueno, we arrived in Celendin and we met Lynda and Milton and Vilzeth. Then we went the next day I think, or the day after that, up to the lagoons, and that was the first time that I went all the way up. When we arrived they had those same tranquileras blocking the road, and they didn’t let us pass. We had to return and leave the car and we climbed, walking behind the tranquilera and we advanced a little and a DINOES came out and he told us that we could not pass but we continued anyway. It was Milton that lead us and he said, “Hey, let’s keep going, let’s keep moving forward,” and I think another DINOES or two came out, but we kept going and we made it to the camp. If I’m not mistaken, it was 3 in the afternoon and when we arrived the sky was like… it was very interesting because it was a relatively cloudy day when we got there, there was a lot of wind, and it was like the wind stopped a little when we got to the highest part, and from there ya we could see the Laguna Azul and down below we could see the spotlights that the police had set up to bother the Guardians no? and later we went up and I met some of the people who were there, there was Jovana, and what’s her name Yeni, Aranán and other ronderos who are from there, other Guardians and then all of a sudden this señora pequeñita, bajita with a high-pitched voice appeared, and another señor with his chullo introduced us and told us, ‘bueno, she is Máxima, she lives in the house right down there,’ and it happened so fast, I was like, ‘Aya, OK,’ but at that moment it didn’t seem very important to me, she was just one more person that we were meeting and by then ya it was getting late, so I said, ‘let’s take some photos.’ The lagoon was there and everyone began to pose, first the ronderos and then all the sudden Máxima stepped up and got ready to take a photo and she was a little nervous, so I tried to make her smile a little, then someone told her to raise her fist, and she did and in that moment PA I took the photo. Even at that moment I still didn’t know, I just thought, ‘ya chèvre,’ no? but all the photos were good because the light was interesting, because the personalities were interesting no? but I didn’t give much importance no? I think Jesús understood a little better what we were actually doing in that moment, and after that the police came. We had a very ugly problem with the police no? About 15 DINOES came with guns and all that, and when they came Máxima and Jaime put themselves in front and Máxima began to say, ‘Go away! What are you doing here in my land?! Get out of here! Leave!’ Máxima became very strong no? that was the first time that I saw her bravery. That night we stayed in the tent with everybody, all cramped and cold, and the photo was there in my computer, in my camera for a while, for a few days till we were returning to Lima and Jesus said to me that he would like to publish that photo and name Máxima the Woman of the Year. It was his idea, he had already been thinking about it. I said to him, ‘ya let’s publish it but we’re going to do it well, we’re going to write something,’ and that same night if I’m not mistaken we met in my house, that was where we made the small text, we made the photo and like that we published it that night and the next day it was like boom, boom, boom, boom… and the whole world likes the photo no? and that’s how it happened. We did it with the collective Nadie Nos Paga. Then some time later, months later, something like that, la República found out and sent a reporter and a photographer to the house of Máxima. In the daily newspaper la República they mention that a collective from Lima had named her the Woman of the Year. Jajaja as if it were official but it was only us who had named her that.”

Jalqueñita- a little woman from the highlands (Quechua).

Bataille, “From the Stone Age to Jacques Prévert” in The Absence of Myth, p. 138

Bataille, “The Notion of Expenditure,” Visions of Excess, p. 120.

coqueando [coca-ing], chacchando [chewing coca], boleando [coca balling], caleando [cal-ing], the fundamental importance of coca chewing as both a core experience in the Andes and as a social binding agent can be inferred from the wealth of words surrounding the practice. “Coca is soaked in a solution of quicklime (CaO) and saliva in the chewer’s mouth. Quicklime, CaO, or locally called cal, is produced when
calcium carbonate (CaCO3) is heated in a kiln. The source of calcium carbonate can be myriad: pulverized limestone, chalk, travertine, marble, marl, seashells and coral (Wingate 9-22). Sea shells are a very pure form of calcium carbonate and this organic material was utilized extensively by pre-Columbian people as the agent (Engel 68; Shady 2003).” (Bradley, *Coca: An Andean Daily Chew*)

153 *Mishkina-* A sweet plant often mixed with coca, the word comes from *mishki*, Quechua for ‘sweet’.

154 *Vervena-* A bitter tasting plant of large and hairy stem with flowers in sprigs of varied colors.

155 *Agua Florida* is a mass-produced factory perfume (New York-Lima) believed to have mystical powers and is a common element in *limpiezas* and other healing ceremonies.

156 *Mal aire* or ‘evil wind’ is a folk illness found throughout Latin America. In Peru *mal aire* is directly attributed to the winds and powers of the Andes mountains. If cold or nighttime air enters into a person’s body it can cause ailments ranging from nausea, fatigue, abdominal pain, headache, as well as issues such as sadness, worry, crying and others.

157 *San Pedro* or as it is called in Quechua, *huachuma*, is a cactus of the highlands which has curative and visionary powers. Representations of *San Pedro* are found within the ceremonial center of the Temple of Chavin de Huantar, providing strong evidence of ancient beliefs and practices surrounding the cactus.


160 I am thinking of when Stephen Dedalus says, “there is a malevolent reality behind those things I say I fear.”

161 Such connections between conquerers and evil are nothing new. A rebel texts from the time of the Great Rebellion of Tupac Amaru II (1780-82) refer to Spaniards as “the devil incarnate, anti-Christ and *pistacos*, the infernal, evil beings who emerged only to steal fat or blood.” (Galindo, p. 101) Similarly, “in the minds of the defeated, Potosí was a monster that trapped bodies in the depths of the earth.” (p. 27)

162 Máxima says, “*una misha rayadilla,*” or in English, a striped cat. *Misha* is cat in Quechua.

163 The fat may be used to light the sacrificial fires, another manifestation of Andean duality.

164 Cobo (1636): “When asked who gave them or taught them their occupation, the majority gave as primary cause and response that they had dreamt, saying that while dreaming some person appeared to them who suffering from need told them that they were being given the ability to cure those diseases which they cured; and whenever they began a cure, they sacrificed something to the person who they claimed appeared to them in dreams and taught them the method of curing and the instruments with which they were to do it.”

165 *Pampa* is a Quechua word for the immense grassy plains of the Andes.
Pendeja is a Spanish word meaning jerk or idiot. The word sometimes also has the sense of 'cunning' and 'mischievous'. Literally pendejo means pubic hair.

Securitas is a private security company employed by the Yanacocha mine.


They were preparing to build 4 or 5 platforms in total, Máxima told me.

ichu — Quechua name for a grass which grows on the high plateaus.

Rocío Silva Santisteban, “Máxima” publicado 2014-08-05 “La Mula.”

“yo viayo eso y deciayo.”

From fieldwork based in Pampas (Tayacaja, Huancavelica) a city in the south-central Peruvian sierra.

From fieldwork based in the provinces of Sud Yungas and Inquisivi, department of La Paz, Bolivia, between 1986 & 1996.

Mannheim, “After Dreaming”, p. 64

There seems to be some discrepancy as to the sex of these dreamers: “Hernandez Principe identified both types of dream specialists as women; Arriaga does not identify the sex of the moscoc. State-level chroniclers (e.g. Cieza 1550:102) mention male state dreamers and interpreters.” (138)


Spedding also notes that Andean dreams are often a type of inversion of waking life. “To laugh is to cry; the coca, that alleviates pains, is the pain itself; the priest, representative of God, is a ‘malignant’ spirit
of the earth. The most valuable cattle, symbol of success and strength, becomes q’ullu [sterile], not achieving the desired.” (138) The reversibility found in dreams is another aspect of Andean utopia, the messianic power to reverse history.

183 Another incident of image-theft, this time by ex-president Alan Garcia. “APRA and PPC use image of Máxima Acuña de Chaupe without authorization”, January 10th, 2016. La Mula. https://redaccion.lamula.pe/2016/01/10/el-apra-y-el-ppc-utilizan-imagen-de-maxima-acuna-de-chaupe-sin-autorizacion/victorliza/?platform=hootsuite

184 Of course women should have equal opportunity in social, economic and political aspects of life but this does not and should not mean she is equal to man, erasing all difference, reducing women down to masculine standards. William Blake says, “Opposition is true Friendship.” Giordano Bruno decries what he calls “brutal equality” when the order of things becomes perverted and confounded because a sort of neutrality supervenes (The Heroic Enthusiast, part II, p. 54). Nietzsche echoes these sentiments when he says, “A legal order thought of as sovereign and universal, not as a means in the struggle between power-complexes but as a means of preventing all struggle in general… that every will must consider every other will its equal— would be a principle hostile to life.” (On the Genealogy of Morals, p. 76)


186 Mariella Balbi in a telephone conversation with Milton Sanchez.

187 The Association for Women in Defense of Life (AMDVida), member of the Latin American Union of Women (ULAM) network, presented a letter on February 5 to the office of the Minister of Women and Vulnerable Populations, Carmen Omonte Durand, who had on previous occasion expressed solidarity with Máxima Acuña de Chaupe for the defense of life and welcomed the judgment of December 17. The same document was also presented to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers requesting his intervention with the human rights violations suffered by the Chaupe family on January 20th and February 3, 2015. The AMDVida letter states that on January 20 at approximately 1:00 pm, fifteen police officers, armed with machine guns and shields, accompanied by engineers and security agents of the company Minera Yanacocha, entered the property of the Chaupe family without their permission. These facts were reported by AMDVida to the office of the Defensoria del Pueblo [People’s Ombudsman] and the Chief of Police Front of Cajamarca. However, there was never any response from these institutions. The threat materialized with the attack of February 3, when, according to the testimony of Máxima Acuña Atalaya, at approximately 10:00 am, about 200 police officers and engineers of the mining company Yanacocha violently entered the property of the Chaupe Acuña family, firing shots. The police rounded up Máxima and Jaime Chaupe and four ronderos that were helping to build an extension to their home, two of them were under age. The agents destroyed the family’s construction without a warrant and/or the presence of a prosecutor. The AMDVida letter also informs that the Chaupe family is the beneficiary of an Order of Cautionary Protection granted by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR), which has required the Peruvian State, through Resolution 9/2014 of May 5, 2014, “to take the necessary measures to guarantee the life and integrity of this family, who find their life and integrity in a serious, urgent and irreparable situation.” Despite this, the State has not taken any measure in their favor and are attacking their fundamental rights, through the illegal use of public forces.

Amnesty International’s call of ‘Urgent Action’ reports that on January 20th, “the invaders started taking photos of the Chaupe’s house, and when the family questioned why the police officers were in their property, no one addressed them or provided any legal documentation to support their actions”. Another article tells that “two days later the security guards threatened to build a guardhouse right in front of her property but were dissuaded by the presence of activists and reporters…However, the guards then built the guardhouse just outside the family’s property lines as well as setting up a pen for 10 alpacas according to sources.” As Máxima stated, “They put up their posts, some ten alpacas and now a guardhouse just in front of my house; and I feel very bad, very uncomfortable. I don’t know if they’re guarding the alpacas or they’re guarding me… We don’t know what might happen to us.” (From the article “Peruvian Indigenous Home Torn Down by Police and Mine Security as Conflict Intensifies” by Rick Kearns in Indian Country from Feb 10th 2015)
The Chaupe’s dog Pastora was hit in the leg and eye, now partially blind and crippled, by rocks from miners’ slingshots. The Chaupe’s got Pastora to replace their previous dog which the police had run over with their trucks. Yanacocha has decided to build a chainlink fence around the Chaupe’s property, with only one exit onto the road. People won’t be able to come and visit the Chaupes without the permission of Yanacocha. Then on January 30th, 2016 another of the the family’s dogs “Cholo” was stabbed in the neck. The family suspect that the perpetrators were the alpaca herders from Yanacocha’s corporate social responsibility initiative for alpaca rearing. When contacted, the mining company denies the presence of herders on the site at the time of events, despite photographic evidence demonstrating otherwise. On 2nd February 2016, Yanacocha personnel entered Máxima’s property, destroying the family’s crops. Photographic evidence taken on the day also show that assailants stole bags potatoes that were recently harvested for the family’s consumption. The family and their lawyer believe this was premeditated, as perpetrators purposefully waited for the harvest to be ready before carrying out their theft (ie. The potatoes were planted 3 months ago). As he attempted to record the events with his mobile phone, Máxima’s son, Daniel Chaupe received several death threats and verbal abuse. Daniel also reports that the security agents and workers attempted to take his phone, to prevent him from collecting evidence. The acts were carried out under the supervision of a contingent of the Peruvian National Police. These agents were fully dressed, equipped as riot police and armed with batons. However, despite wearing their official uniform, all labels and signs on the shield and dress that would indicate “Police” were hidden by black tape. In addition to ongoing threats and security incidents, the company has set up surveillance cameras to monitor the area. A few days prior to the events of the 30th January, Máxima and her family reported seeing a drone flying above their property which they suspect, was intended for the record of their daily activities. However, Yanacocha’s head of communications, Mr. Roberto del Aguila alleges that there were no recordings of the most recent aggressions. (Source: http://www.grufides.org/blog/alert-renewed-attacks-against-maxima)

188 Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, p. 74

189 On the 11th of August, 2011 when the police came to evict the Chaupes.

190 *pampa*— Quechua for ‘plain’ or ‘field’.

191 Division of Special Operations, National Police of Peru

192 This concept comes from the quechua, *sumak kawsay*, which could be translated as the ‘beautiful life’. *Buen Vivir* emphasizes the wellbeing of the community and the environment.

193 Securitas (formally known as Forza) is a private security company employed by Yanacocha

194 Galindo, p. 210 “The Catholic Church and religious orders undertook perhaps the most significant sell-off in Andean places as diverse as Cajamarca and Cuzco.”

195 “The Fujimori government coercively offered to forgive the cooperatives’ tax and social security debts if the members agreed to convert their collective ownership in the cooperatives into individualized and divisible shares.” (Enrique Mayer. *Ugly Stories of the Peruvian Agrarian Reform*, p. 32)

196 *pendejito*— little jerk

197 *puta*— Whore, bitch and/or prostitute

198 *cholo*— Half-breed, mestizo, indian

199 As regards the Andean tendency for duality and reversal, consider this *huayno* from 1979, sung by children from a barrio of the old hacienda Toxama in Ayacucho… “rich and poor will confront one another and among all the poor
we will make you spin around, we’ll trap you
as if you were the thief fox.
Just wait to see,
exploiter (murderer) of my people,
when I become a fox
I will make you die (I will kill you). When I am like the (big) fox
I will make you lose (I will reduce you) I will disappear you.”


201 “a unique seventeenth-century collection of indigenous and colonial mythology… To defend himself against charges of abusing parishioners, priest Francisco de Avila apparently sponsored the collection of the myths to prove that Huarochiri’s Indians were idolators. Avila became one of the leaders in the destruction of indigenous religion, presiding in 1609 over a huge bonfire of sacred huacas, idols, and mummies in what anthropologist Frank Salomon has called a ‘giant auto-de-fé in Lima’s great cathedral square.” (The Peru Reader, p. 29)

202 The Peru Reader, p. 29.

203 The opening Tinkari’s song ¡Agua Si, Oro No!

204 *parteaguas* — watershed.


206 She says “yo como no supe, no conocía la justicia” using both Spanish verbs for ‘to know,’ a mix up I am very familiar as a non-native speaker. She uses both ways to signal knowledge, as if what she refers to is beyond both verbs. Her overwhelming feeling exceeds discourse. By using both she can still only approximate the unknowable shattering impacts of trauma. Her exclusion from knowledge reflects her exclusion from justice.

207 A typical nickname for Celendín.

208 “Ba” is an Andean sound of irritation, dissatisfaction, or disagreement. Máxima here says it jokingly.

209 Whereas I was originally referring to my phone, Atuq is now referring to my dick. Muerto, in regards to dicks, means soft, flaccid and unerect.

210 *Pajarо* or bird, is slang for penis.

211 *Paloma* or dove, is slang for vagina.

212 *Huevo* or egg, is slang for testicles and penis.

213 *mishu* is cat in Quechua and is one of the few Quechua words that many people in Cajamarca still use. I am playing off the sound of the word Máxima said: *misios. Cuatro mishus* or four cats refers to a
common mocking phrase used by the media and pro-miners, as if to say, “Nobody goes to the protests. There were only four cats.”

214 *Pucha* is used for emphasis. It expresses anger, annoyance, wonder or surprise. Might be a less crude version of ‘*Puta.*’ For example, instead of ‘*puta madre*’ people might say, ‘*pucha maquina.*’ People also say ‘*Pukta*’ as in ‘*this gringo is the gran pukta.*’ Here it is substituted for a direct reference to the guy’s penis.

215 *agarrar* is translated as ‘to grab’ but it is a euphemism for having sex.

216 Máxima says here, ‘*traiba*’ which is officially a mispronunciation, but the highland dialect is so lovely in its peculiarity.

217 big ocas

218 “… To my mind there is… an identity of social function between the taboo, or special prohibition, and these acts of special license… It is for the reason that the native is prohibited from doing what he habitually does as a matter of course, that his attention is focused on the activity which which the prohibition is associated. In this manner the importance of the activities of social value is impressed upon the mind of the individual… A common function of both the taboo and of the special acts of obscenity is to make a break in the ordinary routine of an individual’s life and so give emphasis to the social value of the activity with which the taboo and the obscenity are associated.” (324-25)

219 *ichu* is a Quechua word for highland grass.

220 *achichín* is a Quechua word for feeling afraid.

221 *papa* is ‘potato’ in Quechua.

222 Cajamarca has the highest rate of poverty out of all regions in Peru.

223 Genetically modified.

224 *Cholo*— Half-breed. *Rondero*— communal justice recognized by Peruvian constitution and found in villages throughout Peru.

225 “*huataco* is someone that serves, prefers to receive a few cents and sell out their *pueblo* and serve a boss.”

226 large frying pan made of earth.

227 These are Quechua words. *Minga* is a collective work party, *trueque* is a form of barter, *ayllu* is extended family and kinship networks.

228 *Paco Yunque* is a children’s story originally written in Spanish by Peruvian poet César Vallejo and first published in 1951.

229 Daniel always said ‘Green-Goes’ [in English] for *gringos*. He said the term originated in Mexico. The U.S. military uniforms were green and the Mexicans were telling them to get out!
The terms *pucamoros* and *puquillactas* come from two cultures during the time of the Incas. The Shining Path divided into these groups. The *pucamoros* are from the Amazon, a relatively unknown culture. *Puquillacta* is a settlement in Pisco also known as Tambo Colorado, which is also the name of an Incan Citadel. *Puquillacta* was also a Maoist political party that was influential in SUTEP in the 2000s.

A lunch you’d bring with you while traveling, shepherding or working in the fields.

The background of today's *rondas campesinas* lies in the *Mitimae* organization. More recently, the *haciendas* had their own form of *rondas*. Then in 1977 the peasants formed their own *rondas* and this organization spread all over Peru. German Nuñez Palomino, “The Rise of the Rondas Campesinas in Peru,” JOURNAL OF LEGAL PLURALISM, 1996 - nr. 36.

two bulls that are bound together to work the *chacra*

*A choza* is a small hut where a shepherd rests while his or her animals graze.

*cancha* is the roosted corn kernels people eat as a snack. Here the implication is that politicians offer tons of projects, just like the tons of *cancha* that are made in massive pots.

*chochera* is a word for ‘friend’ like *amigo*, *compadre*, *pata*, *hermano*, or *broder*

*mapiosa* is slang for someone filthy dirty.

‘*Chanchas en Celo*’ or ‘*Pigs in Heat*’ is a second iteration of an earlier composition titled, ‘*Chancha en Celo*’ [*Pig in Heat*] the lyrics of which go like this: “Candidate Ollanta / looks like a pig in heat. / Up until he gets the votes / he says, ‘I am with my pueblo.’ / Now that he is president / He’s lost his drive / Now he eats and sleeps / With the Buenaventura group / Candidate Ollanta / looks like a bitch with rabies / slobbering here and there / screaming, ‘take care of the water!’ / Now that he is president / He looks like a bitch with her litter / He bites and barks at the pueblo / to take care of the miners. / Candidate Ollanta / said he’d support the *campesino* / Now that he is president / He’s become a murderer.”  [All lines are repeated twice, in couplets, as is the tradition of many Andean songs]

King Momo gets his name from the Greek god Momus. He is the god of criticism, mockery, satire and poetry. His name is related to μομοφή, meaning 'blame', 'reproach', or 'disgrace' (Liddell-Scott-Jones, Greek-English Lexicon). Momus was a son of Night (Nyx), “though she lay with none”, and the twin of the misery goddess Oizys (Hesiod, Theogony 214). Monus mocked Hephaestus for having made humans without doors in their breast, through which their thoughts could be seen. Looking the lovely Aphrodite over, he could not find anything about her to fault except that her sandals squeaked (according to a second fable of Aesop’s, number 455 in the Perry Index). For his mockery of the Gods, Momus was expelled from Mount Olympus. Hesiod said that in the 8th century BCE epic Cypria, Momus was credited with stirring up the Trojan War in order to reduce the human population (David Marsh, Lucian and the Latins, University of Michigan 1998, p.116). During the Renaissance, several literary works used him as a mouthpiece for their criticism of tyranny, while others later made him a critic of contemporary society.

Some people complained to me about the abuses and vandalism committed during Carnaval. “It has degenerated, it has degenerated a little,” one man told me, “they dirty the churches and sometimes they use these paints and the enamel penetrates into the stones pues no? in the pileta, in the churches, and some of that paint is there for years because the stone absorbs it. The stone is a porous quarry and ya it doesn’t come out, ruins it pues no? ya the houses, this no? terrible, ya Carnaval passes and the whole world has to paint their houses, at least where the ño carnavalón passes. They toss buckets of water even from the third or fourth floor. If there are girls, paint falls on them, it ruins all the facades, everything, but it is a lot of fun, at least for the people that come from outside, that is, it must seem very strange to them, ya as I tell you, from New Year onwards, every Thursday, Friday, Saturday the plaza de armas is a madness, hundreds of kids, 2 months before, go there to sing…”

Such customs have old roots. As Bakhtin writes about Medieval Europe: “The diableries were legalized and the devils were allowed to run about freely in the streets and in the suburbs a few days before the show and to create a demonic and unbridled atmosphere.” (90)

Carnival: 1540s, "time of merrymaking before Lent," from French carnaval, from Italian carnevale "Shrove Tuesday," from older Italian forms such as Milanese *carnelevale, Old Pisan carnelevare "to remove meat," literally "raising flesh," from Latin caro "flesh" (see carnage) + levare "lighten, raise, remove" (see lever (n.)). Folk etymology is from Medieval Latin carne vale " 'flesh, farewell!' "

wildness, lack of restraint, debauchery, unleashing, licentiousness, indulgence, unruliness, lawlessness

ojo verde, he says, green eye.

Musical instrument made from a gourd, you scrap it to make rhythms

Comes from picar: to sting, to bite; to itch; to nibble

These coplas all rhyme or off-rhyme in Spanish. And, of course, they are all sang as couplets in the original, meaning that each line is sung twice.

cholo

cabro concha de tu madre

cuando era una caca de vaca

huevo means egg but it can also mean dick, balls, or the entire male genitalia

huevadas can be translated as 'idiocy' or 'nonsense'

‘half-burned castle’ refers to the towers of fireworks called castillos or castles, lit during festivals. The doves are the little pinwheels that fly off the castle when they ignite, spinning and flashing in the night as they drift back down to earth. In this context, the half-burned castle also signifies a half-erect penis or an unsatisfied lover, and the dove also means a pussy.
“At 9am on 28th December environmental leader Hitler Ananias Rojas Gonzales, 34, was killed by five bullets. Mr. Rojas was a prominent leader in the struggle against the mega dams that the Brazilian company Odebrecht and the Peruvian government are trying to impose along the Marañón River. The murdered leader held the positions of president of the Rondas Campesinas, vice president of the Defense Front and was recently elected mayor of the village of Yagen. Hitler Rojas left five orphaned children, all minors.”


“El pueblo despertó, la mina se jodió” or “el pueblo ya se unió, la mina se jodió” Pueblo literally means ‘town’ or ‘village’ but by extension ‘pueblo’ also means the people living in the village, the community.

“Ollanta cobarde, no te quiere ni tu padre!”

“Urgente, urgente, un nuevo presidente!”

“Ollanta traicionero si quieres mas dinero alquila tu trasero!”

COP stands for Conference of the Parties, referring to the countries that have signed up to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Beyond Good and Evil, p. 84

The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud, Translated and Edited, Dr. A.A. Brill. “Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious,” Random House, Inc. 1938. p.697


The Inkarri myth states that Atahualpa would someday return to restore justice and banish the Spaniards.

Remember Nietzsche: “What is the seal of liberation? - No longer being ashamed in front of oneself.” (The Gay Science, p. 220)

The Inkarri myth states that Atahualpa would someday return to restore justice and banish the Spaniards.

Michael Holquist, “Prologue” to Bakhtin, Rabelais and His World, p. xviii

“dando aire al puga con el sombrero, y ella alzo su fondo y se orina en tu sombrero y tu lo tomaste y mojaste el bolo.”

“quita el cacho del vieja y meta lo para su culo.”
“¡Tumba la vieja! ¡Cacha la vieja! ¿Quien gana?”

Picardias, “in the jokes and also in the dance,” are traditional, carnavalesque forms of obscenity.

Vacilar can mean ‘hesitate’ or ‘to have fun.’ Both of these meanings seem to resonate with the uncertainty and power unleashed by obscenities.


Bataille, Inner Experience, p. 46


Bataille, The Unfinished System of Nonknowledge, “Nonknowledge and Rebellion”, p. 129

Bataille, Inner Experience, p. 34

Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, p. 274

Benjamin, Illuminations, p. 255


A sly, untrustworthy person. Pendejo also means pubic hair.

canguritos: squats like a kangaroo

Atuq uses the word ‘pata’ for ‘feet’ which really means the hooves of an animal, but campesinos often mix up human and animals, like when they call a girl an embra, which really means a female animal.

Atuq misspeaks. ALA stands for the National Authority of Water, but I love his luminous errors.

very rude, cheeky, or sassy.

Dirty politicians who egotistically take advantage and manipulate political issues for personal gain.

Interview with Milton Sánchez Cubas by Silvia Tello in “Minería y movimientos sociales en el Perú”.

a mute person

a rubber slingshot that is wrapped around the thumb and index finger.

Oscar Eduardo Valdés Dancuart (born 3 April 1949) is a Peruvian businessman and politician who was Prime Minister of Peru from December 11, 2011 until July 23, 2012. A former military officer, he was appointed as Minister of the Interior by President Ollanta Humala on July 28, 2011. Less than five months later, Prime Minister Salomón Lerner Ghitis resigned and Valdés was appointed as his successor on December 11, 2011. Lerner’s resignation allowed Humala to re-stock his cabinet with a decided shift to the right. Valdés was Humala's army instructor and reportedly owns a mining concession. Peru's National Intelligence Service is headed by Víctor Gómez, another of the president's old army buddies and former head of security at the Antamina copper mine. Valdés was dismissed on July 23, 2012 after criticism on his handling of the Conga Mining project. Ex-President Alejandro Toledo, whose Possible Peru party supported the Humala administration so far, expressed concerns about the "militarization" of the government.

This 30 day state of emergency was then extended at the beginning of August for another 30 days.

I use the word fiesta because ‘party’ would lose the element of festival and revolution.

On June 27th some leaders of the P.I.C. received a phone call from someone warning that a large number of documents were being unloaded at the home of an employee of the Municipality and relative of the Mayor. The members of the P.I.C. feared that fire would be set to the Municipality in order to accuse the P.I.C. of perpetrating a terrorist attack. Immediately the leaders filed a complaint in the Fiscalía in order to save themselves from any culpability. (¡ASÍ FUE EL CONGAZO EN CELENÍN! by Wilder A. Sánchez Sánchez)

Roasted corn kernels that she is likening to bullets because of their golden color and number.

The same school where Atuq works as a P.E. instructor. Cesar was a student of Atuq’s.

On 28 January 2014 the National Coordinator of Human Rights in Peru (CDDHH) announced that the case seeking justice for the five murdered protesters had been archived due to a lack of evidence.

On April 7, 2016 the Panorama Cajamarquino reported that the Commissioner of the Office of Dialogue and Sustainability of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Pastor Paredes, alerted to the placement of a red flag in the population center of Jadibamba in the province of Celendín. He said that, “this is evidence
of the presence of the Shining Path.” My friends who live in Jadibamba told me that the flag had ‘Conga
No Va!’ written across it, but that detail was curiously not included in the news.
http://www.panoramacajamarquino.com/noticia/se-teme-presencia-de-sendero-luminoso-en-Celendin/

312 The mine does this by offering benefits to certain villages which are within the ‘primary sphere of in-
fluence’. Villages like San Nicolas or Agua Blanca are notoriously pro-mining, with new houses, cars,
schools, hospitals, soccer stadiums, all paid for by the mine. Some families become business partners with
the mine, opening companies which subcontract heavy machinery.

313 This moment of the police knocking over the coffin was also immortalized in the style of Guaman
Poma’s Good Government. At the top of the image it reads, “Disgusting Government: They kill them and
don’t let them bury their dead as is just: saying farewell to the plaza that saw them grow. On us, their
Celendín brothers and sisters, they impose the dictatorship of fear and weapons, the only tools of ‘dialogue’
available to the rule of law.” On a sheet of paper are the names of the martyrs of water: “Faustino Silva
Sanchez, Cesar Medina Aguilar, Eleuterio Garcia Rojas, Joselito Vasquez Jambo, Jose Sanchez Huaman”.
On the police batons is the word “Order”. On their teargas grenades is the word “Law.” On their belts is
written, “Everything for my Yanacocha”, and around their necks are medallions inscribed with “MY” [Min-
era Yanacocha]. On the falling coffin there is more satirical commentary, “They fulfill their duty by drop-
ping the coffin.” On another coffin is written: “The mother does not only suffer the loss but also the apathy
and lack of respect for her late son.” Across the bottom of the image written in red is, “Peru is not a brand
name, it’s a crucible of perpetual wounds.”

314 7.62-mm Israeli bullets fired from Kalashnikov assault rifles.

315 “Porque son perros: Protestas, discursos autoritarios e industrias extractivas: el caso Conga” by Rocío
Silva Santisteban, in Minería y Movimientos Sociales en el Perú. Instrumentos y propuestas para la defensa
de la vida y los territorios. Published by Hoetmer, Raphael, Castro, Miguel, Daza, Mar, De Echave, José y

316 With his campesino accent Atuq says “harto” but the ‘correct’ Spanish would be “alto.”

317 “les pisan carajo”

318 “el Ramón pucta nervioso el maldiciau”

319 found all around the house

320 le habian sacado pero su mierda

321 puta le habian sacado su mierda

322 Another group had gone up on the mountain side and spelled out CONGA NO VA with flaming
torches. They coordinated the lighting of the torches perfectly with the arrival of the people in the plaza
de armas.

323 Every bit in formation.

324 https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/peruvians-cajamarca-stop-building-giant-gold-mine-2011-
2012
325 Schmitt, Political Theology, p.5

326 Strong, “Foreword”, in Schmitt Political Theology, p. xx

327 Strong, “Foreword”, in Schmitt Political Theology, p. xx


333 “Mariano Egaña and Andrés Bello in Chile were two of its initial representatives. However, it was Juan Bautista Alberdi in Argentina who more explicitly defined the characteristics of this second rhetoric of backwardness and justified the use of emergency powers as a necessary tool to achieve political stability and foster economic prosperity.” Gonzalez-Jacome, Jorge. "Emergency Powers and the Feeling of Backwardness in Latin American State Formation." American University International Law Review 26 no. 4 (2011): 1077.

334 “no pueden pedir perfeccion a un pais que esta en via desarrollo”

335 Literally, “what Wednesday?” People use ‘miercoles’ as a less offensive way to say ‘mierda’ or ‘shit’, therefore the expression can be translated as something like, “what the hell has the Judicial Power done to help?”

336 Part of the city slogan, “Order and Work, Respect for Cajamarca”, found on all garbage trucks and government buildings.

337 “These contracts devalue the nature of the forces of order who, in the end, adopt the interests of the extractive companies. In practice, the mine become the employers of the police, breaking the monopoly of the use of force by the State (characteristic of a democratic regime) and violating the duty of the State to protect its citizens…. Far from contributing to a peaceful resolution to the conflicts, they have aggravated the violence— including the use of lethal weapons against citizens, arbitrary arrests and torture. In some cases the torture was perpetrated inside of the facilities of the mining company (Majaz, 2006).” Police Mercenaries at the Service of Mining Companies by GRUFIDES. Lima, Peru, 2013.

338 https://writingresistance.wordpress.com/

Country | Size | Year | Police per 100,000 people
--- | --- | --- | ---
Peru | 104,000 | 2009 | 352
Brazil | 478,001 | 2001 | 282
Chile | 30,300 | 2012 | 182
Colombia | 150,000 | 2012 | 323
Ecuador | 40,000 | 2012 | 262
Canada | 67,425 | 2009 | 202
United States | 794,300 | 2010 | 256

The United Nations recommends a minimum police strength of 222 per 100,000 people. http://www.gutenberg.us/articles/list_of_countries_by_number_of_police_officers

GRUFIDES c. La Republica de Perú – Petition submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights alleging the Peruvian state’s failure to address the persecution of human rights activists by American mining company and private security forces (2009) (55 pages).

Marco Arana, preface to Police Mercenaries at the Service of Mining Companies.


Rocio Silva Santisteiban, “Porque son perros: protestas, discursos autoritarios e industrias extractivas” in Minería y movimientos sociales en el Perú instrumentos y propuestas para la defensa de la vida, el agua y los territorios.

A un año de los muertos de Celendín by Juan Arellano Valdivia. http://arellanojuan.com/a-un-ano-de-los-muertos-de-celendin/


353 I’m not sure what mienchas means but it seems to be a powerful exclamation. My guess is that it’s Atuq’s personal slang for mierda or ‘shit’.

354 “Blood Festival” (yawar is blood in Quechua)

355 “The concept of ‘poor’ in the Andean world was not based on a lack of material goods or precious metals, but on one's exclusion from social and family relations.” (José Antonio Mazzotti, Incan Insights: El Inca Garcilaso's Hints to Andean Readers, p. 74) “wakcha is doubly defined as meaning both 'orphan' and 'poor' .” Billie Jean Isbell, "the family that cannot mobilize reciprocal aid... are truly orphaned, not just materially poor.” (1978:76) Quoted in Jessica B. Leinaweaver, The Circulation of Children: Kinship, Adoption, and Morality in Andean Peru, p. 72.

356 Joseph Bastien writes about how the Kaatans, an Aymara speaking people in Bolivia, name the places of their mountain according to the anatomy of the human body. Bastien tells us that such personification of Nature has been going on in the Andes for a long time: “Andeans are united by a shared cultural understanding of the mountain.” (xx) The human mountain has roots in pre-history: “The solidarity of the Inca empire was its similarity to a human body.” Garcilaso de la Vega wrote how Cuzco was the navel of the world, “since Peru is long and narrow like the human body, and Cuzco is situated in the middle of its belly.” (1961:57) This metaphor extended to Inca social organization: “the inhabitants of Upper-Cuzco were to be considered as the elders, and those of Lower-Cuzco as the younger brothers. Indeed, it was as in the case of a living body, in which there always exists a difference between the right and left hands.” (1961:45) This metaphor was imposed in all the cities and all the villages in the Empire.

357 “What they say is that there are no ‘indigenous’ because the peasants are Spanish speakers. They bind the ‘indigenous’ to an other language, which is absurd because in Cajamarca culle was lost. The theme of the ‘peasant’ is bound with the Agrarian Reform that left behind the concept of ‘indian’ in order to pass to a marxist and classist concept of the peasant as a social class. This was in 1968. But, Máxima is indigenous, in fact, because her membership is to an other culture [cultura-otra].” from a private communication with Rocio Silva Santisteiban Manrique, ex-national coordinator of human rights in Peru.

358 The idea of convivencia finds roots in many Andean concepts such as ayni, yanantin, and especially sumac kawsay.

359 Cuy is Guinea Pig in Quechua.

360 reganadillo— irrigation, for example of grasses, but in this context I’m not sure what he’s referring to.

361 Here rica means delicious, sexy but it also has the connotation of monetary wealth… which a white woman also has for Peruvian men.

362 “for instance, one cannot explain the effects of a victory without taking psychological reactions into account.” (Clausewitz, p. 184)

363 Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” Illuminations, p. 255
“les saca su mierda”

todo ahuevados”: something like ‘complete jackasses’

“The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing that stands in the way. Some see nature all ridicule and deformity... and some scarce see nature at all. But to the eyes of the man of imagination, nature is imagination itself. As a man is, so he sees.” (William Blake on August 23, 1777, letter to Reverend John Trusler, The Portable William Blake, edited by Alfred Kazin.)

During my dissertation defense, the committee suggested multiple directions in which I could develop my work in the future. Many of these directions circulated around issues of language. Val Daniel tried to sharpen my understanding of phantasms with a philosophical nuance regarding language as 'concordance' (rather than correspondence or resemblance) in which the relationship between word and thing is one of identity. Blake’s emphasis that poets created the gods through an act of naming could be read as a form of affective nominalism, while Artaud’s rupture between words and things could be posited as a form of cognitive nominalism. Daniel suggested that animism, or what he chose to call pantheism (where the divine suffuses everything), surpasses nominalism (Duns Scotus) which only gives a name to a certain feeling or a metaphoric label to a certain idea. He referred to Bruno’s medieval realism as a way of going beyond such nominalism. Daniel gave Peirce’s example of how the sound of a trumpet is scarlet. In this example, there is a shared quality. It is not that the sound stands for scarlet or reminds one of scarlet. Rather, there is something in scarlet that is trumpeting, a quality that is inherent in both the sound and the color. It is not just metaphoric. It is something iconic, but not as mere resemblance. There is identity.

The original draft of my conclusion included a section about Andean speaking-to-Nature as found in the texts of the Extirpators of Idolatry. The Spanish Jesuit Bernabé Cobo (1580-1657) wrote with outrage: “The Indians of Peru were so idolatrous that they worshiped as Gods almost every kind of thing created.” Andeans call these things huaca which refers to the sacredness of natural phenomenon as well as man-made shrines or any sacred object. In Pablo José Arriaga’s (1621) description of Andean nature worship, principle deities are the Sun [both as Puchao (Day) and Inti (Sun)], the Moon [Quilla], the stars especially the Pleiades [Oncoy], and lightening [Libiac or Hillapa]: “they raise their hands and pull out their eyebrows and blow them upward, talking all the while to the sun or to Libiac, calling it their maker and creator and asking it to help them.” (23) They invoke the Sea [Mamacocha], coming down from the highlands to call upon it (“All of them do this, even the very small children” (23)) and the Earth [Mamapacha], especially the women at seed time: “They talk to it and ask for a good harvest and pour out chicha and corn meal, either by themselves or through the intermediary of a sorcerer.” (23) Pérez Bocanegra advised Catholic priests to ask their Indian confessees questions like: “…do you speak to the fountains, lakes, and springs, adorning them and dancing for them; and dressing a small pitcher like a woman, and feeding it do you pray, ‘O Mother fountain, lake, or spring, give me water without ever ceasing, urinate without stopping’” [1631:133]? or “when it does not rain and our fields are drying, do you adore the clouds and speak to them, imploring, “O Mother Sea, from the end of the world, make it rain and form dew, and I adore you.” [1631:133]? (Silverblatt, p. 48). Of course, the Extirpators interpreted such speech in one way and one way only: “they speak with the devil.” [Acosta (1590)]. Yet this Andean sensibility survives. It finds an echo in the work of Jose Maria Arguedas. He is trying to decide between hanging or shooting himself. Until then he is able to live for a few days playing with stray dogs and pigs. He describes how he got to scratch the head of one especially large nionena [pig], which began to grunt with delight, collapsing little by little and “once he was stretched out with his eyes shut, moaned sweetly.” (10) Now, without warning, the next sentence bursts forth with all the wonder and power of myth: “The high, extremely high waterfall that flows down off the unreachable rocky peak was singing in the deep tone of that nionena, in his stiff bristles, which softened; and the sunshine that had heated the stones, my chest, and each leaf on the trees and bushes, warming with plentitude and beauty even my wife’s angular and forceful features— that sun was more
present in the nionena’s language, in his delicious slumber, than anywhere else. The waterfalls of Peru, like those of San Miguel, where water slides down into abysses hundreds of feet deep, dropping almost perpendicularly and irrigating terraces where food plants flower, will comfort my eyes moments before dying. They portray the world for those of us who know how to sing in Quechua; we could go on listening to them forever.” (Foxes, p. 10-11)

“As sign, language must resign itself to being calculation and, to know nature, must renounce the claim to resemble it. As image it must resign itself to being a likeness and, to be entirely nature, must renounce the claim to know it.” Adorno and Horkheimer, Dialectic of Enlightenment. p. 13.

Olson: “they retain the power of the objects of which they are the images.” (“Human Universe”, Selected Writings, 58). Smith: film frames “are hieroglyphs, even when they look like actuality. You should think of the individual film frame, always, as a glyph, and then you'll understand what cinema is about.” (In Sitney, Visionary Film, 257). Artaud: “a whole new language seems to have been invented: the actors with their costumes constitute veritable living, moving hieroglyphs.” (Theater and its Double, 61)

Pizza is code among my friends and I for marijuana.

I sometimes call the cops pigdogs because, while we know them as pigs, in Peru they are known as dogs.

Tambo is the district of Bambamarca closest to the lagoons and most involved with the their defense.

Maden- the road leading to Bambamarca and to the Yanacocha mines.

How pathetic.

paro— strike

arenga— collective chants made by protesters.

The Quinde is the new mall in Cajamarca. Quinde means humming bird in Quechua.

Oscar Eduardo Valdés Dancuart (born 3 April 1949) is a Peruvian businessman and politician who was Prime Minister of Peru from 11 December 2011 until 23 July 2012. A former military officer, he was appointed as Minister of the Interior by President Ollanta Humalaon 28 July 2011. Less than five months later, Prime Minister Salomón Lerner Ghitis resigned and Valdés was appointed as his successor on 11 December 2011. He was dismissed on July 23, 2012 after criticism on his handling of the Conga Mining project. Ex-President Alejandro Toledo, whose Possible Peru party supported the Humala administration so far, expressed concerns about the "militarization" of the government.

vinsa? dried twisted buldick for whipping

“What’s your conscience say? Conga No Va!”

I’m hungry.


———. “La Defensa Del Cerro Quilish ¿Una Cuestion Romantica?” Cajamarca, Peru: GRUFIDES., n.d.


Converso, Gianni. *Open Pit*. Documentary, N/A.


Hoetmer et al., *Minería y movimientos sociales en el Perú instrumentos y propuestas para la defensa de la vida, el agua y los territorios*. Lima, PTDG y otros., 2013.


Sánchez, Wilder Sánchez. “¡Así Fue El Congazo En Celendín!,” 2014.


“Se Teme Presencia de Sendero Luminoso En Celaydín.” *Panorama Cajamarquino.*


APPENDIX 1: CHRONOLOGY OF THE CHAUPE CASE

I do not know the exact dates of the trials. They were long, drawn-out, nightmarish deliriums. The best I can tell you is that between 2011 and 2014 there have been two separate trials, both of which Yanachocha eventually won, but due to blatant irregularities in the legal proceedings, as well as a lack of incriminating evidence, the Chaupes won the appeal both times. Máxima wouldn’t be able to tell you the exact dates of the hearings either. Mirtha, the Chaupe’s defense lawyer, had a hard enough time getting the family to agree on the dates of the police attacks in order to synchronize their testimonies. This is not because they’re trying to manipulate the court but because many peasants have a different sense of time. There have been so many attacks, threats, thefts, disgraces it’s hard to keep track. All the Chaupes’ know is that their case has gone on for five years and they’re exhausted. Not to mention money spent on travel and time spent going back and forth between court and their home in the highlands. Sometimes they’d spend all morning going down to the city, hitching a ride on top of a milk truck if they were lucky, or walking for 8 hours if they weren’t, only to be informed that the trial was suspended because the Prosecutor had other business in Lima.

The history which I will relate was made by GRUFIDES but my experience of the events was another thing entirely. The timeline presents the events in a linear, organized, clear and concise fashion, while in life there was a thick fog perpetually hovering over the ‘facts’. No matter how many times I asked, I was never able to get a clear chronology from the Chaupes. Instead, my endless questions would provoke story upon story, stories which often repeated, hearing one bit now and another fragment weeks later. Only afterward did I try to piece it all together. Like the Chaupes, I just barely kept my head above water as waves of events ceaselessly crashed upon our lives. So I want you to keep this straight: I will present a “clear and distinct” history for you, but
no one ever lived it this way. In experience, the present is shrouded in uncertainty, the force of the past can return at any moment, and the future is foretold in premonitions. There would be long tedious periods of waiting around, gaps in the official history where we were chewing coca and cracking jokes, trying to anticipate the mine’s next move, when a sudden eruption of fervor would bring life into high relief.

The Chaupe family buys the Tragadero Grande plot on January 6, 1994 and becomes a member of the Peasant Community of Sorochuco (legally recognized as commoners with the Certificate of Possession) on January 16, 1994. Then in 1996, the company Minas Conga S.R.L. buys 269.52 hectares from the Peasant Community of Sorochuco. Fast forward to 2011 when Minera Yanacocha discovers the Chaupe family on land which the mine assumes to be theirs and essential to their operations.

After the police tried to evict the family on May 24 and August 8th of 2011, the Chaupes charged Yanacocha with usurpation, once at the First Criminal Court of Celendín on May 25, 2011, and then again on August 10, 2011, to the media and to the Defensoría del Pueblo. On August 11th, 2011 came a third attempt at eviction. 16 year old Jhilda Chaupe threw herself in front of mining machinery to stop its approach onto her family’s land. She was hit in the head with the butt of a rifle and left unconscious on the ground. She was presumed dead by both her family and the police. In order to not be held accountable, the police filed a report in which they argued that it was the family who attacked them with “stones, sticks and sharp pointed weapons (machetes)”, allegedly leaving several police officers wounded, however there are no medical certificates of the alleged injuries suffered by the officers. That same day, August 11, 2011, the District Attorney’s Office archived the denunciation of the Chaupe family. The next day Yanacocha reversed the accusation of usurpation against the Chaupe family. On August 13, 2011
the criminal trial against the Chaupe family began and on October 29, 2012 the first ruling declared the Chaupe family guilty of usurpation. The Chaupes appealed this sentence.

While the appeal court was underway, the conflict continued to boil. Máxima was named “The Woman Of The Year” in December, 2012 by an activist collective in Lima. An article in La Republica called her “The Lady of the Blue Lagoon”. On January 30th, 2013 there was another attempt at eviction, when 60 police officers violently entered the camp of the Guardians of the Lagoons which was located on the property of the Chaupe family. They detained Jaime and tried to hit Máxima. A letter from the National Coordinator of Human Rights to the Minister of the Interior, in defense of the Chaupe family, temporarily halted the attack. On January 31st, 2013, Yanacocha denied aggression against the Chaupe family, publishing a video which claimed that only plastics and food remains were found in the camp of the so-called Guardians of the Lagoons, at which point the police proceeded to clean the area.

On August 2, 2013, the Superior Court of Justice of Cajamarca declared the sentence of the Chaupe family invalid, as well as the whole judicial process that was brought against the Chaupe family, for containing not only errors of juridical type and of fact, but for having obviated fundamental evidence that effect the case and that are favorable to the family. This sentence signified not only the recognition that the family was subjected to a mishandled trial, but that they were unjustly sentenced without sufficient evidence. On December 3, 2013 they were meant to reinitiate the trial against the Chaupe family in the Court of Celendín but the proceedings were suspended for the 13th of December because the Prosecutor did not show up. Then on December 13th, 2013 a new judge showed at the hearing declaring that for the principle of immediacy and so that the accused can have correct use of the right of defense that justice grants them, the same judge should follow the whole trial from beginning to end. The new judge declared the annulation
of all the proceedings and a break of the process. The accused were newly cited for the 10th of March at 10am in order to restart the trial. Meanwhile on January 30th, 2014, Máxima received a threatening phone call during which a voice said, “Leave your property, if not, you’re going to die.” Two hours later, while she and her daughter were tending to their crops, two officers of the DINOES entered their land and told them that they shouldn’t cultivate because it wasn’t their property. Two more agents were standing at the perimeter of their land and four were inside of two trucks parked outside their house. Around mid-day a police officer and an armed agent of the DINOES entered the house of Máxima and announced that everybody had to go immediately. Seeing that Máxima was calling the local radio station ‘Radio Lider’, the officers withdrew. On the morning of February 4, 2014, there was another incident as 18 agents of the Division of Special Operations of the National Police of Peru (DINOES) entered the Chaupe’s property in order to stop them from cultivating their crops.

On June 20th, 2014, the trial against the Chaupe family was reopened for the forth time. The new judge, Sr. Padilla, refused to incorporate the evidence (documents related to the purchase of the land on the part of the Chaupe family) ordered by the previous trial, a fact that had justified the cancellation of the first trial in July 2013. On July 8th, 2014, the hearing in the case of the Chaupe Family was suspended for the absence of the prosecutor. Without any justification, the Prosecutor R. Alcantara didn’t show at the trial, preventing it from occurring. When asked how they feel about this, Máxima and Jaime Chaupe answered with a genuine smile and very honestly, “It’s ok Doctora, ya we are very tired”, “We’ve walked another 8 hours in order to come all the way here.” On July 21st and 22nd, 2014 the Chaupe family received death threats from police, mine workers, and engineers. On the July 24th, 15 police, 15 workers and 2 engineers of Minera Yanacocha entered their property to cover the ditches that serve to mark the property limits.
señor Jaime arrived, the police caught him and wanted to beat him. Máxima has indicated that if her husband is found dead, the Yanacocha company is the only one responsible. Then on August 5, 2014, the Criminal Court of Celendín issued the second sentence declaring the Chaupe family guilty of usurpation. The Chaupe were condemned to two years and 8 months of preventive detention as well as forced to pay a civil reparation of 5,500 soles and assume the costs of the trial. The Chaupes were told to hand over the invaded land to the company under threats of eviction. Once again the Chaupes appealed in the Superior Court of Justice of Cajamarca.

On August 8th, 2014, Yanacocha made another attempt to evict the family from their lands. Close to 200 national police officers of Peru, heavily armed DINOES, together with the Public Ministry, surrounded the home of the Chaupes and accused the family of invading private property. On this same day, Minera Yanacocha lodged four more denunciations against the Chaupes for the crime of usurpation, despite that everyone knows that a person can not be judged twice for the same crime. The legal defense lodged the respective actions to nullify the decision.

September 9, 2014 the appeal is received in the Criminal Court of Appeals of Cajamarca and on October 1st the Criminal Court of Appeals declared the challenge of Minera Yanacocha inappropriate. On November 13, 2014 Minera Yanacocha solicited the Criminal Court of Appeals of Cajamarca to reschedule the appeal hearing, which was set for November 20th, due to a doctor’s appointment of the defense lawyer of Yanacocha, Juan Carlos Camacho Mendoza, in the Clinic Ricardo Palma in Lima, curiously scheduled for the same date as the hearing. This is part of a series of tricks and maneuvers by which Yanacocha has obstructed and prolonged the judicial process. They’ve tried to challenge members of the Appeals Court to take them off the case, and now when they’re about to hold the final hearing, their lawyer gets sick and asks to reschedule the proceedings. Could it be that the mine is trying to pay off members of the Court? Are they waiting
for the President of the Court to change next January so that the mine can appoint members who they are absolutely sure will give them a favorable ruling? On November 20th, the hearing was attended by the defense lawyer of Minera Yanacocha, Arsenio Oré Guardia, of the Estudio Oré Guardia law firm, who asked to reschedule the date of the hearing, claiming to not know the case. He was not sufficiently prepared to complete the defense in an adequate manner because the company had assigned him to the case only the day before. However, this firm of lawyers handles all of the criminal cases of Minera Yanacocha, therefore it is surprising that the founder of this firm does not know the case and can not develop a defense. In addition the mining company has certified three more lawyers in the process, which could have been designated to attend this audience, but never were. Based on this request and, arguing the equality of conditions of defense of both parties, the Court decided to reschedule the hearing for the 1st of December at 9 in the morning. The hearing for the case of the Chaupe family was finally held in the Criminal Court of Appeals of the Superior Court of Justice of Cajamarca on December 1st, 2014. Months back Yanacocha had petitioned that the Superior Judge Jorge Fernando Bazán Cerdán not participate in the case for his work with the Rondas Campesinas and Judges of Peace from the Institute of Intercultural Justice of Cajamarca where he is Director. The court declared this request of Minera Yanacocha inappropriate.

Despite the fact that the defense of Yanacocha was composed of a group of expert criminal lawyers, led by the renowned Dr. Arsenio Oré Guardia, the company could prove neither the ownership nor the possession of the land in question, still less that the Chaupe family had invaded the property using violence and physically beaten twenty DINOES. Dra. Mirtha Vásquez, proved the ownership and possession of the Chaupe family in this land, offering towards this effect the Certificate of Possession issued by the community of Sorochuco and a title of Ownership from
1994. The Court set Dec. 17th at 4 in the afternoon as the date that they would declare the sentence of this case.
APPENDIX 2: A BREIF HISTORY OF LAND STRUGGLES IN PERU

The Chaupes’ struggle exposes an entire history of land struggles, dispossession, privatization and land recovery. In 1928, the founder of the Peruvian socialist party, José Carlos Mariátegui declared definitively: “The problem of the Indian is rooted in the land tenure system of our economy.” Speaking of the Indian, Mariátegui quotes Encinas: “His economic strength and all his activity are found in the land. To take him away from the land is to alter profoundly and dangerously the ancestral tendency of his race.” (24) And yet, again and again, the theft of ancestral land is precisely what happened. Mariátegui identifies “the moral and material misery of the Indian” to be the result “of the economic and social system that has oppressed him for centuries,” a system he called gamonalismo: “While it rules supreme, there can be no question of redeeming the Indian.” (30)

Gamonalismo necessarily invalidates any law or regulation for the protection of the Indian. The hacienda owner, the latifundista, is a feudal lord. The written law is powerless against his authority, which is supported by custom and habit. Unpaid labor is illegal, yet unpaid and even forced labor survive in the latifundium. The judge, the subprefect, the commissiary, the teacher, the tax collector, all are in bondage to the landed estate. The law cannot prevail against the gamonalismo. (22-23)

When Mariátegui writes that, “the influences of gamonalismo are all-powerful, acting directly or through parliament with equal effectiveness”, (23) he could just as easily be speaking about the mines in Cajamarca.

The only problem I see with Mariátegui’s analysis is that, as a Marxist, he focuses exclusively on the economic aspect of domination. While it’s true that, at times, he attempts to expand the notion of domination beyond merely economic concerns, stressing that gamonalismo “signifies a whole phenomenon,” Mariátegui falls back onto Marxist assumptions that the bedrock of social reality is ultimately economic in nature. In one breath, Mariátegui states that his “approach rejects and disqualifies any thesis that confines the question to one or another of the
following unilateral criteria: administrative, legal, ethnic, moral, educational, ecclesiastic.” (24) But why doesn’t economic appear on this list? Because he believes that it encompasses the other points of view. Mariátequi continues, point by point, to expound upon the limitations of each of these lenses. The Indian problem must not be reduced to a matter of “drawing up protective legislation.” As “an ordinary administrative matter,” the writing up of decrees, laws and provisions intended to protect the Indian “have been quite useless.” (24) Likewise, “the assumption that the Indian problem is ethnic is sustained by the most outmoded repertory of imperialist ideas. The concept of inferior races was useful to the white man’s West for purposes of expansion and conquest.” (25) Neither is the solution religious: “the missionary is merely assigned the role of mediator between the Indian and the gamonal.” (27) Nor is the Indian problem one of education for: “Educators, I repeat, can least afford to ignore economic and social reality”(28), “Economic and social circumstances necessarily condition the work of the teacher. Gamonalismo is fundamentally opposed to the education of the Indian; it has the same interest in keeping the Indian ignorant as it has in encouraging him to depend on alcohol.” Turning a blind eye to the culture problem, which would include, rather then be reduced to, the economic problem, Mariátequi disturbingly proposes, “the saving formula is thought to be discovered in boarding schools for Indians. But the glaring inadequacy of this formula is self-evident in view of the tiny percentage of the indigenous school population that can be boarded in these schools.” (28) The problem with boarding schools is a mere numbers game, not the wholesale cultural genocide which would ensue.

The tendency to consider the Indian problem as a moral one embodies a liberal, humanitarian, enlightened nineteenth-century attitude that in the political sphere of the Western world inspires and motivates the ‘leagues of human rights.’ The antislavery conferences and societies in Europe that have denounced more or less futilely the crimes of the colonizing nations are born of this tendency, which always has trusted too much in its appeals to the conscience of civilization. (25)
But regardless of my discrepancies with his Marxism, I believe Mariátegui fundamental conclusion is sound: “To wipe out abuses, it would have been necessary to abolish land appropriation and forced labor, in brief, to change the entire colonial regime.” (26)

Gamonalismo came to an end with the Agrarian Reforms, when, as Galindo writes:

“unions from the La Convención valley demanded land for peasants and an end to servitude. They occupied seventy haciendas, paralyzed the valley, and imposed a type of Agrarian Reform Law-authored by Hugo Blanco, a Trotskyite affiliated with the tiny Revolutionary Leftist Front (FIR)-that essentially abolished the hacienda. The initiative resonated with peasants elsewhere… Blanco, isolated and unarmed in La Convención, ended up in Cuzco’s La Almudena jail and then transferred to Tacna, where he faced trial and possibly the death penalty. The trial made Blanco famous. Before his capture, according to anthropologist John Earls, some La Convención peasants began to identify him with the Inca. Although it went no further, it was the first encounter between Andean culture and Marxism. Conscious of this confluence, Blanco believed exploitation was not just economic: ‘They destroy our culture, our Quechua, our Aymara, our Guarani, our yaravi[d], our aesthetic values. They spit on us, as the tayta says.’” (206-207)

I applaud Hugo Blanco’s insistence that cultural heritage is the foundation for Andean resistance. When Máxima would sing one of her songs, or tell a joke or a story, we all felt that it was a victory for the lucha. I’d also like to mention that Hugo occasionally came to visit Celendín to support the lucha against Conga. He’d stay at Atuq’s house. We’d stay up late into the night, chewing coca, smoking tobacco and drinking cañazo as Hugo decried the ‘total crisis’ of Western Civilization.

The Agrarian Reform arose as a strategy by the Peruvian state to temper the blaze of massive peasant uprisings. Howard Handelman in Struggle in the Andes writes, “The peasant mobilizations of the early 1960s was unquestionably one of the largest peasant movements in Latin American history” (1975, 121)

“Researchers Virginia Vargas and Virginia Guzmán identified 413 movements reported in Lima newspapers from 1956 to 1964. Pedro Gibaja concluded that in 249 of those movements, the principal objective was land; only 58 targeted salaries, and 106 addressed diverse issues such as freeing leaders from jail, establishing schools, and protesting repressive measures. Protagonists came from Indian communities in 222 movements (54 percent), which helps explain why the mobilization of choice was land occupation in 215 cases (52 percent). For landowners, these actions were ‘invasions,’ but peasants saw them as ‘recoveries.’” (209)
Alberto Flores Galindo sums up the 1960’s land conflicts in this way: “Peasants struggled for land and fought to abolish secular oppression.” (208)

From Cuzco, the agitation spread to the central sierra. In 1963 the livestock division of the Cerro de Pasco Corporation clashed with neighboring communities: “The North American company owned eleven haciendas covering almost 1,483,000 acres appropriated from peasant lands between 1920 and 1950… The central sierra movement was more mestizo than in the south and specifically targeted land recovery… But in the south, demands appeared linked to centuries-old indigenous oppression and included an ethnic dimension.” (207) Handelman writes, “It could be useful to think of the Cuzco peasant movement as part of a long historical tradition of indigenous rebellion against the cultural and economic domination of whites (or mestizos).” In 1964, “the demands of 300,000 peasants for land, schools, and salaried pay plunged the Peruvian Andes into tumult.” (205) This rebellion spread throughout most of the country (205). In these land struggles, “possession became property” (210), showing the porousness of the legal discrepancy which continues to haunt the Chaupe case: “Handelman signaled that 75 percent or more of families who in 1965 benefited from agrarian reform under Belaúnde’s first government obtained land through occupation… The Andean countryside was decapitalized.” (210)

This was by no means the first incidence of such land conflicts in Peru. Between 1945 and 1948, peasants of the central sierra sought legal recognition for their communities. They formed unions and established the Peasant Confederation of Peru: “peasants dusted off papers and property titles, turned to lawyers and consultants, and demanded the return of usurped land… peasants had to demonstrate knowledge of original town boundaries… [they] constrained their actions to legal channels and, through litigation, began to recuperate history and acquire identity through memory.” (206)
There was “a prolonged ebb in peasant struggles that included the 1930s international financial crisis,” (205). But this was a minor pause. Galindo tells us that “between 1919 and 1923 about fifty rebellions took place in Peru’s southern Andes” (167). Falling wool exports and prices in the southern economy after World War I was the spark that lit the powder keg (171). At the end of the nineteenth century, Arequipa was a thriving commercial capital dedicated primarily to wool exportation: “The formation of new haciendas, the acquisition of others, and the expansion of areas that landowners directly controlled, inside or outside their estates, accompanied the growth of wool exports. Increased production in a low-tech agrarian economy required extensive exploitation, which meant acquiring more land and livestock.” Struggles arose as landowner economy confronted peasant economy: “For landowners, the introduction of capitalism meant consolidating and increasing hacienda lands; for peasants, it meant dispossession, more work, and less time for their own parcels and flocks” (169). As traditional landlords became modern landlords, “They demanded more work of their Indians and tried to appropriate land and pastures from tenant farmers. Haciendas launched an offensive inside and outside their boundaries against community lands.” (171)

With respect to these peasant rebellions Galindo writes:

“We lack testimonials in which peasants expressed themselves directly. Landowners, journalists, judges, prefects, and other authorities almost always spoke for them in local and national newspapers, prefectural reports, and judicial proceedings. More than the persistence of ethnic differences, the veil of silence over peasant life throughout the republican period explains the absence of Indian voices in historical records. Peasant culture became defensive and took refuge in lies and muteness. The racist stereotype of the ‘lying Indian’ was grounded in reality. Speaking, telling the truth, and sharing information provided those in power with new charges and accusations. Indians saw mistis as foreigners and, even if they were submissive and respectful in public, they called these outsiders names, mocked, and scorned them when speaking Quechua with other colonos. A comparison of 1920 legal testimony with similar colonial documents underscores the lack of judicial protection for communities under the republic. Peasants expected little from an appearance before a judge; Cuzqueño Martín Chambi captured one such instance in stirring photographs. Any declaration might incriminate them. After all, they were not citizens. Knowing
that mistis perceived them as inferiors, Indians feigned slowness and lack of understanding and provided ridiculous alibis.” (174)

I hope that my work will be a corrective to the absence of peasant voices in Andean history.

This is just a glimpse of the history of trauma which has defined Peru ever since the conquest. It should come as no surprise that resource extraction, and specifically mining, has been at the heart of the conflict from the beginning.

“The conquest was a true cataclysm for the defeated. The brutal demographic decline of the indigenous population due to diseases and the new workload was the most visible indicator. The encounter with Europeans meant death. Despite past exaggeration, prudent calculations by demographer David N. Cook put Peru’s 1530 population at about 9 million, which plummeted to an Indian population of 601, 645 by 1620. Population decline worried the Spanish because Indians were the richest resources of these new territories; without them, the Spanish could not extract Potosí minerals cheaply. The Spanish established their colonial system not on the fringes but in the very center of the new territories. The goal was not to create markets for European goods but to extract primary products, which, given the technology of the era, required a massive workforce. They established mines with cities and haciendas around them. Following the pattern of Castilian communities, they organized Indians into towns. There they could watch, control, and mobilize them for the mita labor draft and for religious services. The Indians became the dominated. (20-21)

There is an uncanny echo of this history running throughout the case of the Chaupe family. Their conflict is part of a tale centuries old, a bloody wound marking the origin of history.
APPENDIX 3: THE LIFE OF DOÑA MÁXIMA

Translation: Beatriz Simonsohn and Christopher Santiago

Ysidora: “Ya pues they say my abuelita traveled lots to the city, to Cajamarca. She left my mother alone with her dad ‘cause they’re only four siblings, two girls and two boys. But her oldest brother went to Lima and only the three were left… later my abuelita took her other sister away and only my mamá and other uncle, the last one after her, were left. They lived alone pues ‘cause my abuelita traveled and traveled since they had a big huerta [farm] with peppers, with eggplants, granadilla an’ she took ‘em to the markets to sell. And they stayed behind alone and they say it was very, very [poor]… the people didn’t have, didn’t eat rice or noodles ¿no pues?, and they say my abuelita wasn’t interested pues in seein’ her, left her food, no one went up to her and that’s it she left, and the papá of my mamá, he liked to calear, o sea, he liked coca a whole lot, and wha’d they do? They say, for the harvests they helped him and my abuelita pick the fruit and they hid it under the actual harvests, with the actual leaves they covered it up, they say, the fruits, and she’d go to the city because she left everything este...under control pues. She’d go to the city and so they’d get what they’d hid and she’d go to the pueblo and sell it and with real little she’d buy from ‘em ¿pue ‘cause what can you do? Like that she’d get 7 soles, 6 soles, what today would be 16 soles, asi. She was chiquitita pues when she went to sell, so about six, seven years, eight years old maybe and she’d go, they’d buy, she’d stretch a little money to buy coca for her papá and the other little bit she’d stretch it for that thing that holds the kerosene, she’d buy kerosene, her oil, her rice, her candles so they’d have light…”

Elias: “At that time there wasn’t any rice there…”
Luna: “Of course the rice is actually something new ‘round here, ¿no?…”
Elias: “Of course...they hadn’t even tried it.”

Ysidora: “Ya...but I dunno, they’d buy something else and they’d come and they only had [what they grew] in their chacra they’d get ricacha, what they call now, arricón, llacones, they’d plant their papas there and…”

Luna: “Llacón, qué rico [how delicious], it’s kinda sweet ¿no? Looks like a sweet potato but like a fruit...yellow...looks like a potato, remember we ate it with Daniel Gil…”
Shanti: “Real juicy.”
Ysidora: “It’s re contra [reeeeaally] good for the kidneys, for cholesterol…”
Tina: “Ah sì, I remember.”
Luna: “Of course, buena [amazing]…”

Ysidora: “Ya pues so she’d get there, cook and they say her papá would hug my mamá and say to her, ‘hijita’, it’s what he’d say to her, ‘One day when you get big and you marry, I’m gonna have you get married white,’ it’s what he’d say to her, ‘I don’t wantcha to get married asi like any old woman’ pues, so when she was 12, 11 I think her papá got real, real, real, real, real sick, he was sick for like a year and after, there was a month when the sickness was even worse but ‘round here that’s what we call hechicería [witchcraft] ¿no pues? Since my abuelita left him alone a lot an’ next door there was a señora livin’ and she was jealous of ‘im and so, the señora comes and gives ‘im the...the bocado [bite to eat], as they say, for my abuelito, and she says, ‘here comadrita, bring it to your husband, have him eat like this,’ she says to her, and my abuelita she takes it but we don’t know if she knew or did it voluntarily like someone who does a service, anyway she took it. And so my abuelito told her, ‘that’s it, Teofila,’ that’s what he told ‘er, ‘I don’t want your comadre’s food that you bring me ‘cause that comadre of yours doesn’t wanna see me alive’, that’s what he
said. So he grabs the food, everythin’ he empties it at the door and gives it to the dog, they themselves didn’t eat it, after an hour the dog fainted, fainted, it died.”

Luna: “¡Ah sí!”

Ysidora: “Sí. And from then on the viejita pue, her neighbor that lived next door, she says to my abuelita, ‘¡Ay sí! He knows we’re doing witchcraft,’ that’s what she says to ‘er, ‘How we gonna do it?’ and they say the señora enchanted him on a mountain, like they took his spirit to enchant it on a mountain. ‘¡How’d they do it? pue I dunno. And he was all sick and my abuelita’d call ‘im, it’s that my abuelita’d get all bitter when he was sick. It’s that she was bad my abuelita, pue. It’s that she’d say ‘your whole life, every day, you cry and cry about your belly, that your belly’s hurting. Your trampa [trap] it’ll take you away,” ‘tis what’d she say.”

Luna: “But wasn’t your abuelita Máxima’s father’s mom?”

Ysidora: “Yea… was his wife.”

Elias: “No pue, his wife.”

Ysidora: “His wife, my abuelita and my abuelito…ajá. Just that my abuelita…it’s as if he and I were my abuelita Teofila and my abuelito Estanislao, and she was my mamá asi...(laughs)...and asi, if I was always traveling just’a not stoppin’ with ‘em and the two just lived like that but he was young pue.”

Luna: “And Máxima’s dad was a campesino, he dedicated himself to the campo?”

Ysidora: “All the campo, nuthin else, and they say at night my abuelita’d say so that he die, ‘ay his trap’ll get ‘im, ya got this good-for-nothin’, it’s too much, gets me so mad, every single day in bed, in bed until he dies,’ and at three in the morning they say no, 11 at night they say my abuelito called to my mom from his bed, they was sleepin’ asi and it’s that he says to her, ‘hija, come here,’… he’d call to my abuelita, he’d say to ‘er, ‘get me a glass of water’ that’s what my abuelito’d say to my abuelita. My abuelita wouldn’t get up and when she wouldn’t get up my abuelito he’d call my mamá, ‘hija come here,’ he’d say, ‘come here.’ My mamá it’s that she gets up…and he says to her, ‘hijita please get me a glass of water,’ is what he says to her. ‘Ya,’ is what my mamá said, goes, brings him the glass of water and pue my mamá so ya there he was in his last hours ‘fore death ya pue. They say that he drank the water but different, he’d make a noise here in his throat fuertazo [really loud] and he finished the glass of water and he said to my mamá, ‘here hija, the glass, keep it,’ is what he said to ‘er, ‘thank you so much hijita for giving me your water,’ he said, ‘you’re going to be blessed and Dios is going to help you ‘cause I’m gonna pray, ‘cause you’ve never left me and you’ve always been there for me,’ is what he said. And my mamá was like me, muchacha, I reckon pue, ‘I didn’t realize nothin’. What could it be?’ She said ‘My dad had his water,’ and goes away, to sleep que pue, at four in the morning, it’s that, my abuelita, ‘¡China!’ is what she’d call my mamá, ‘¡China! get up, your papá, what could he have? He’s not moving, not moving,’ is what my abuelita’d say pue, an’ que pue so when he’s drinking the water numa pue he dies, an’ he said so to my mamá at that very moment, and in the mornin my abuelita realizes pue but ya how many hours had he been dead ya?!…and they get up in the morning ya people let everyone know ya but when he’s cold cold dead ya so, and my abuelita didn’t even care that there’s a dead man there next to ‘er.”

Elias: “She wasn’t interested.”

Ysidora: “No, she wasn’t interested. I never met ‘er, ya I never met my abuelita ya, none’s of us met her’s what my mamá tells us, she tells it asi, that my abuelita was real bad, and like that she’s told us, so my mamá, pue she’d cry ‘cause she couldn’t stand when my abuelito told ‘er, ‘hija, I’m gonna have you get married white,’ my abuelita done told him, ‘Ay, pues she’s your only daughter, why you gonna make her get married white, the others ya ain’t your kids, you’re
not gonna help ‘em with their house, you’re not gonna help ‘em any,’ ‘cause my abuelito, he told ‘er, ‘one day when I die, I’m gonna die but helpin’ with your house, leavin’ a house for you to live in it with your kids,’” is what he’d say to my mamá but my mamá at the time didn’t even have a husband or anythin’. And after that he died, leavin’ my mama alone pue an’ so my papá ya was ya ‘round 12, 13 I reckon an’ so my abuelita jus’ like my abuelito planted a whole lotta chacras with arricones and carrots and my papa’s papa, his papa an’ his mama back then they had, like, they were people who had a lot pues, they had all kindsa animals and made lotsa quesillo and they say my papa robbed the quesillos from my abuelita and he was bringin’ ‘em to my other abuelita, to my mom’s mom so they’d give ‘em carrots and he’d say to her, ‘Tíaaa [aunt],’ he’d say to her, ‘come’n sell me your carrots,’...(laughs)...he’d say to her, ‘take these here quesillitos.’ An’ so they’d send my mamá, when it’s a pretext ya, they say asi asi he’d come an’ so like I said, my abuelita traveled, so my mamá stayed behind all alone with my tío [uncle] Angel, with her other brother, the youngest, an’ that one was kinda mute ‘cause he couldn’t talk, not ’til he was 12, 13 years old I reckon, they say when he was a kid he did nothin’ but whine and my abuelita’d lock ‘em out ¿no? didn’t want ‘em to sleep inside their own house but outside on the patio and she’d lock ‘em out ‘cause she thought someone’s gonna come and rob stuff. And so ‘cause of that my mamá cries sometimes, she says, ‘if I was my mamá I woulda took care of me like I take care a you guys that I’ma go with the das das people,’” she’d say, cryin’, ‘‘cause so back then she was already sleepin’ outside, my tío Angel there too, the two of ‘em just sleepin’ asi and so my papá maybe ‘cause he was in love, so, he’d get there, get there, it’s that...and...and in the night, ya he says that he went an’ touched my mamá’s breasts, my mamá the chibolita, ‘I reckon I’s about 11 years old,’ so...and asiíííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííííí
meters long I reckon, for pickin her fruits pue, an’ just with that she got my papá and gave ‘im his smack a puyasos got ‘im outta the garden. So my papá uuuuuuuu he got up an’ said, ‘I’m goin’, I’m divorcin’ you.’ ‘Divorce me!’ is what my mom said, ‘Get outta here. Why’d you come anyways?’ An’ asi, so, my dad got up an’ got his things together, everythin’ he had, an’ so he went to ‘is mamá, divorced. And my abuelita ya, got back from Celendín an’ she went to denounce ‘im. For what?’ is what my mamá said, ‘I don’t want you to denounce ‘im or to take care of me, I better just go.’ An’ they’re like that for a while ‘til my papá comes back around, ‘Ay, it’s just, forgive me,’ he’d go on sayin’, ‘Forgive me.’ But my mamá nothin’, ‘ya no,’ she’d say, ‘you’re lookin’ at other women, go off with ‘em. I don’t wanna be with you.’ An’ so that’s how they were, they say my abuelito came and my abuelito it’s that he said to my abuelita, ‘you’ve thrown out your daughter, you’ve left her por ahí [who-knows-where],’ which, ‘das das pue’ them kids musta gone fell in love,’ he’d say pue, to my other abuelita ‘an’ I don’t wanna ‘cause ya’ll are a buncha deadbeats, you don’t got nothin’,’ is what my abuelita said to ‘em. An’ so when ya they left it like that, they didn’t want nothin’, neither of ‘em. They were separated for three months, mindin’ their own business, an’ after my papá, who knows what he was thinkin’, all’s a sudden my papá went back to my mamá. Again, ‘Wasn’t meant to be, us splittin’ up,’ my mamá says.

Luna: “He felt guilty.”

Ysidora: “So he came back, ‘from noooow on! you don’t ever touch me, hit me, kick me,’ somethin’ like that, nothin’, nothin’,” she says. ‘An’ if I let ‘im for sure he’d still be doin’ things to me,’ she says.”

Luna: “Those were other times ¿no? It’s a whole other form of interacting.”

Elias: “But she’s been brave pue also for...for not lettin’ others boss her ’round or treat her bad, hit ‘er.”

Ysidora: “So my papá pue goin’ to the jornal ‘cause they say he’d get five soles a day goin’ to the jornal pue he bought my mamá some blonditas [doilies] that they use to make enagues [half-slip dresses] as they call ‘em. She had me sewin’ the fabric, which my mamá bought and he’d buy the blonda an’ he had his hermana, my papá pue, an’ so she said to ‘em, ‘If you’s jalando prosa [stuck-up] with what my hermano’s buyin’ for ya,’ she says, an’ so my mamá grabbed an’ tore the petticoat an’ ripped off the blonda, grabbed another piece a fabric she had for a dress an’ tore it an’ took it an’ handed it over an’ so she said, ‘here’s the things that your hermano bought for me, see,’ an’ so she said, ‘here, put it on ya’ you too bota prosa,’ she said to ‘er, ‘cause I ain’t, I ain’t gonna put on your hermano’s nice stuff. It’s what he buys me,’ that’s when my tía cry, cry an’ cry, why? she asked her, ‘give ‘em back,’ an’ so she gave her all his things an’ then my abuelito came an’ took my papá’s clothes, ‘cause he ya knew another chica in the jalca, and my abuelita wanted him married to this girl who had money pue, so he took off his llangujes, took off his shirt, what he had on, his sweater, his pants and left ‘im just in ‘shorts’ as they call ‘em an’ a tiny shirt en viviri that they use ta have before an’ just in those two rags they left ‘im, he took off everythin’ else, ‘You go with the woman who I don’t really like and one day when you’re askin’ for favors, I’ll see you there,’ is what she’d say pue. My mamá says, ‘For what? Me I had my hens that I raised myself, I sold ‘em with that I bought ‘is clothes for ‘im, your papá,’ she says to me, an’ once again they made their life together. Yea it’s done been a story real...my mamá her story’s real sad...since she was little she’s suffered a lot…”

Luna: “But now they have a good relationship ¿no? since...seems to me…”

Ysidora: “Bueno since I grew up, since I realized that he, he never treat my mamá bad no, o sea by hittin’ ‘er, smackin’ her like that no. Sometimes also ‘cause a us, when they had their kids
“ya, sometimes just to not listen to us they’d start arguin’ but ’cause a us not like ’cause a theyselves, no.”

Luna: “That’s happened in my family, too…”
Ysidora: “No…”
Shanti: “Me, too.”

Ysidora: “Nows they get along good, it’s that my mamá too, she’s real smart, my papá even though his parents had money, they put ’em in high school, in school my papá but my mamá no pue she didn’t have the chance go to no school, nothin’. And she, but o sea she’s smarter at everything, but not my papá. O sea I mean if she says, I do this…”

Luna: “My mamá organizes things, and my papá ya accepts…”
Elias: “He accepts it numa.”

[All laugh]

Ysidora: “Aja accepts, that’s how my papá is. Now too he’s like that. My mamá’s for everythin’.”
Elias: “Now they’re more in love ya.”

[He laughs]

Ysidora: “I’m tellin’ you, my mamá like she says, ‘I ain’t lived or was born in a family where my mamá gave me advice, lead me to be an other person… if I were different… but in my case no pues.’ She was by ‘erself and ya pue my abuelita made her life impossible. She’d say to my mamá, ‘you’re a poor woman, we don’t wantchu over here.’ When she’d go to my abuelo’s house, the papá of my papá, everyone listened when she talked with my papá’s mom, my abuelita’d say, ‘Let’s see, maybe you done everythin’, maybe everythin’s ready,’ she’d come guapazo [all dressed up], ‘why are you thankful for your husband? That’s why you listen to your husband, but do your things,’ she’d say, but just to make my mamá listen. My mamá’d crrrrrrrrryy pue back then, now ya no we don’t let her ya cry much, we tell her ya what’s done is done ¿What can you do? and now my abuelita has her daughters and she does what she did to my mamá.”

Luna: “Your abuelito, your dad’s dad, is he still alive?”
Ysidora: “Sí, both of ’em.”
Luna: “Mom and dad…?”
Ysidora: “My dad’s dad and mom.”
Luna: “And do you see them sometimes?”
Ysidora: “Sí now they’s livin’ on the coast we don’t see ’em a lot now and before too we’d get there but not all everyday like.”
For example, you wouldn’t say to Máxima, “I’ll meet you at your house at 1 o’clock,” because she doesn’t have a clock. She only got a cellphone recently when GRUFIDES gave her one in case of emergency, and often there is no credit on it or the battery isn’t charged, because there is no electricity in their house, so then GRUFIDES bought her a solar charger. No, you wouldn’t say, “I’ll meet you at 1,” rather you’d say, “I’ll meet you on Tuesday,” or whatever select days the *combis* pass by her house, going to and fro, between the cities of Cajamarca, Celendín and the small highland town of Santa Rosa. And if no one was there when you got to her house, you’d wait until someone came back from the fields, in which case you’d more then likely be spending the night. Or you could be sure to find her in Santa Rosa on Fridays at the market, selling her skirts, ponchos and blankets, always sitting in the same spot on the grass. Then you could hitch a ride with Máxima on a freight truck up to her house. Of course you’d have to slip past the Yanacocha checkpoint.

Don’t get me wrong, Máxima can read a clock and understands the days of the month, but in addition to modern clock time, she has another sense of time that is attuned to natural cycles: day and night, wet and dry seasons, sowing and harvest. Her points of reference are bound to nature, to places, things that are dependable: like the Azul Lagoon or the gloomy peak of La Picota. She don’t count the days, hours, minutes and seconds like we do. She’s always going to eat lunch at more or less the same time.

When the modern time collides with *campesino* time you get what people call *la hora Peruana* or ‘Peruvian Time.’ In Peru, you agree on an hour, but it never happens. A car is supposed to leave at a certain time but it leaves much later because they’re waiting for more passengers or somebody goes to buy something in the market saying they’ll be gone for 15 minutes and everybody is stuck waiting for them to come back.

The situation Mariátegui describes is almost exactly the same one which Patrick Wolfe describes in his article, “Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native”: “Land is life…So far as Indigenous people are concerned, where they are is who they are (387-388) I say almost, because the mine has not come to settle the land of Cajamarca, but to rape it and then move on.

“The term *gamonalismo* designates more than just a social and economic category: that of the *latifundistas* or large landowners. It signifies a whole phenomenon. *Gamonalismo* is represented not only by the *gamonales* but by a long hierarchy of officials, intermediaries, agents, parasites, et cetera.” (Mariátegui, *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*. p. 30)

Yaravi is an Andean music genre whose antecedents have been traced to the Harawi, an Inca musical and poetic tradition. [Editor’s note in “In Search of An Inca”, p. 207]


The belief that the mountain enchants you, pulls you, attracts you and you only want to be on this mountain or in this place… the mountain bewitches you.