“scattering the seeds”:

shared thoughts on some songs to the food crops
from an Andean ayllu

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Lines from a traditional English folksong- “The Ripe and Bearded Barley”,
from an LP “Living by the Air”, by a four-piece folkgroup called “Heritage”.

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**Foreword**

In recent years there has been a growing dissatisfaction with the structuralist attempt to view folk and totemic classification systems of the natural world as just “food for thought” (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 1963). Recent literature on human-animal and human-plant relationships in South America has challenged the view that the natural world is just a static analogy for the divisions in the human one, primarily by shifting the focus of attention away from social structures, and towards social processes (see for example URTON, 1985). Another aspect of this approach (examined in ARNOLD, 1987 and 1988 and OSSIO, 1988) describes the way that Andeans view foodplants in cosmological terms, by analysing the symbolic and ritual aspects of agricultural practices and processes within their social contexts. In all of these examples, attention has moved away from theory towards practice, and away from the anthropologist's model towards the social actor's one.
Following on from these earlier studies, this paper takes the occasion of a performance of songs to the food crops in an Andean ayllu, with an accompanying exegesis about them by their performer, as the starting point in a broader discussion about the symbolism of Andean food crops in their social setting. It shows how the lines of the songs, and the vernacular discourse about them, expand on a complex metaphysics which seems to derive in part from an Andean reworking of Christian doctrine. It shows how, according to this Andean metaphysics, each of the principal cultigens is classified within a common cosmology and cosmogony of the food products. Moreover, the taxonomic practices of this classification system, evident in the songs and the exegesis about them, begin to reveal certain organising features of an Andean order of things - for example how and why certain crops may take precedence in distinct ecological zones, and how the specific agricultural practices of each zone may influence the order of the crops in the food songs. But, above all, our examination of the practice of plant cultivation from the perspective of one particular social actor shows how his classification of the food products not only enriches an abstract system of food for thought, but how one important nutritional aspect of the main cultigens of the Andean region is as “food for the soul” in the constant cycles of reproduction and regeneration of ancestral substance.

1. The context of the songs

In the region of Northern Potosí in highland Bolivia, there exists a tradition of singing to the new seeds of the food-crops before planting them, a custom which has been forgotten in many other parts of the altiplano. There is evidence that this tradition still exists in the North of Potosí among the Laymi, Jukumani, Aymaya and Pukwata and others. In neighbouring Qaqachaka, once a part of Pukwata in Northern Potosí, but now an independent cantón located in the department of Oruro, and where we have carried out several years of fieldwork, the older women still remember the existence of this tradition, although they have now forgotten both the words and the melodies of the songs. Only wives who occasionally marry in from nearby Jukumani still carry the tradition with them. The reminders of this recent cultural loss had whetted our appetite to hear the songs from Northern Potosí in their entirety. See Map. 1
This came about when Don Domingo Jiménez Aruquipa, a wiseman (yatiri) from Aymaya in Northern Potosí, described to us in detail this region-wide tradition of singing to the food seeds. His ayllu\(^1\) has the full title of Santiago de Aymaya, and is in the Province of Charcas, but Aymaya is also part of a larger political unit which includes ayllu Jukumani. Aymaya is categorised as “above” (patxasaya), while Jukumani is “below” (manq”asaya) in a region-wide system of dual moieties. And Aymaya, like other ayllus in the region of the North of Potosí, has its territories divided between the highlands (the puna in Quechua, or suni in Aymara) and the warmer valleys to the east (likina), in the system of vertical archipelagos described by Murra (1972) and others. Embedded in the words of the song texts, and in Don Domingo's accompanying exegesis of them, is an awareness of this larger ecological reality. From Don Domingo's perspective, there are both striking similarities to, and differences from beliefs found in other parts of the altiplano concerning the various food products mentioned in the songs.

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\(^1\) Ayllu is the term for the indigenous idiosyncratic unit of social organisation in the Andes. Please note the distinction between Don Domingo's ayllu which is called Aymaya, and his language, which is Aymara.
Don Domingo lives in the warm Aymaya valleys, a couple of days walk from the regional town of San Pedro de Buenavista which he visits on feast days. At an altitude of about 3,300m, the area is classified as the “central zone” (taypirana) between highland and valley, and Don Domingo's community stands at the head of the valleys. They practice a mixed economy, mainly of maize cultivation, with some potato and other Andean root tubers, legumes and grains such as wheat and barley, and the herding of sheep, goats and cattle. For us, the new perspective on agricultural life from the viewpoint of the valleys of Aymaya was quite different in many respects from that which we had found among the highland herders and agriculturalists of Qaqachaka. In Qaqachaka, the herding of llamas and alpacas takes place at the highest altitudes (over 4,000m), with sheep herding and potato cultivation at the middle levels (3,800m) and only very little maize cultivation takes place at all at the lowest levels (3,500m). The Qaqachaka herders, like the herders of the distant highland region of ayllu Aymaya, were therefore required traditionally to make the long journey with their llamas, at least once a year, to the warmer valley lands, to barter their highland products for the maize from the valleys. Nowadays the journeys are still made, although increasingly more people make the journey by truck and buy the valley maize with cash.

We were able to make these direct cultural comparisons between highlands and valley because the songs to the foodseeds, and the ritual language which accompanies them, are both spoken in Aymara. In the part of Aymaya where Don Domingo lives, the Aymara language penetrates much further east into the valleys than might be expected from some recent linguistic studies (see for example, ALBÓ, 1981). Don Domingo, typically, is bilingual in both Aymara and Quechua, but he doesn't speak any Spanish. There are social rules for the occasions when each of these languages is spoken. Although Quechua seems to have become the more prestigious language for regional transactions with outsiders, the people of Aymaya valleys still speak Aymara at home and within their community. In ritual life, too, they address their food products, their animals and their landscape in Aymara. They also associate Quechua as the language of the Inka, brought into the region during the time of the Inka conquest, whereas for them, Aymara was the language of the preceding chullpas, the indigenous people of the zone.
What follows is primarily a rendering of the songs, expanded by Don Domingo's own exegesis of them, into the English language. But, in addition to the linguistic and semantic analysis of the songs, per se, what also emerges from our study, is a comparative view of agricultural production from the viewpoint of the Aymara speakers of the valleys of Aymaya in relation to the view we had already witnessed in the altiplano of Qaqachaka. Many cultural themes emerge from the texts of the food songs which have enabled us to place these differences within a broader perspective. Throughout the analysis we have therefore counterposed the views about the food products which we found in the valleys of Aymaya, with those we found earlier on in Qaqachaka.

It is from this broader perspective, that we were able to address a common assumption in the Andean literature, namely the emphasis given to the symbolic importance of maize over potatoes, that maize is considered to be the higher prestige food and potatoes of lower prestige, and that maize rituals are considered to be always more elaborated than those concerning potatoes. Although Murra put these ideas forward 30 years ago (MURRA 1960), we felt that the recent work by Ossio (OSSIO, 1988), for example, had continued to make these same assumptions, without properly addressing the reasons why. What has emerged in our more comparative study is that the predominance of maize is just one perspective on food cultivation, namely that of the valley maize growers. This view does not exist in the highlands of Qaqachaka. On the contrary, the predominance of potatoes is emphasised over and over again.2

By analysing the beliefs about cultivation found in the ritual language of the songs and libations in Aymaya, and in the ritual language of libations in Qaqachaka, we have been able to expose some of the material and cultural reasons for this diversity of beliefs about the same food products from the different perspectives of the agriculturalists of the valleys, and those of the llama herders (and agriculturalists) of the highlands. In this way we were able to understand more about the varying roles which maize and potato cultivation play in the vernacular discourse concerning folk taxonomies, cosmology and cosmogony of the regional food products, and we could even begin to stretch

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2 See, for example, ARNOLD, 1987, 1988 and n.d. 1.
our gaze further afield in time, to the past of the chronicles, and in space, to other parts of the Americas.  

Scattering the seeds

In his numerous journeys throughout the region, Don Domingo has noted the various different categories of song types, of which the food songs are just one variety. He has also observed the small differences from ayllu to ayllu in the Aymara dialect terms used to describe them. In Don Domingo's particular Aymara dialect, he uses the verb similt'aña to describe the specific act of singing the food songs, a term which means literally “to scatter the seeds”. The verb root is derived from a borrowing into Aymara of the Spanish noun semilla meaning “seed”, and the verbalising suffix -t'a indicates the momentary nature of sowing small grains separately in the earth. The Aymara word therefore reveals the essential inseparability between the term for the type of song and for the physical action of sowing the food seeds.

Don Domingo, from an oral tradition, has what seems for us an extraordinary memory of many aspects of his life and culture. He knows many genres of song, but he does not sing them well; in fact he utters them in a chantlike rhythm with little sense of melody. This is because it is the women of the ayllu who actually sing the songs and it is they who later walk behind the ox-drawn ploughs, which are guided by the men, physically dropping the seeds from their woven containers into the newly turned furrows in the earth. See Plate 1. During the sowing ceremony, it is the women who say, before beginning to sing in unison, similt'añani - “Let's scatter the seeds.” This linguistic inseparability between sung song and sown seed is not just a metaphor for a musical diversion, a light-hearted accompaniment for the hard physical tasks of cultivation. Nor is the connection of ideas merely coincidental. Rather, it is considered absolutely necessary for the future success of the food crop that the women sing to the seeds before sowing them. The people of ayllu Aymaya believe that if the women don't sing to the food seeds, then the food products

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3 See, for example, JOHNSSON, 1986. Cross-cultural comparisons can also be made with the work on crop cultivation in other regions of the Americas, such as the work on maize by LEÓN-PORTILLA (1988) in Mexico.
will not grow at all. Since Don Domingo is a wiseman, he often has the privilege of participating with the women in their songmaking.

**The libations before the songs**

The rituals of sowing in the valleys of Aymaya begin in the month of September, after the irrigation canals have been cleaned. They always open with a series of libations to the food crops offered by both men and women, and then the cycle of songs to the seeds begins. The libations open with an offering to maize, and Aymayas say as they pass the round of drinks:

*P'aqulapini taqins munataxa -* The “red one” is really desired by all
*was sartayixa -* let the cups stand up -
*Tata San Francisco, Mama Rusaryu,*
*Tata San Francisco, Mama Rosario,*
*taqinitanwa......* we are all present......

**PLATE 1: PLOUGHING IN THE SEEDS**

Note that the men manage the plough and bull teams, while the women walk behind sowing the seeds in the ground.
For the people present during this offering of libations, the men are said to represent *Tata San Francisco*, the saint of the plough teams, and the women represent *Mama Santa Rosario*, the female saint of the seeds. Both are regarded as essential for the act of sowing the new seeds into the earth. Don Domingo illustrated the importance of these two saints, and the particular association of *Mama Rosario* with the food songs, in a myth concerning the origin of the cultivation of maize. He described how, once upon a time, *Tata San Francisco* and *Mama Rosario* had just scattered maize seeds randomly about onto the surface of the earth, only heaping a little earth around each one. The maize plants grew tall stems and produced some fruits, but the harvest was a poor one, and the fruits were small. *Tata San Francisco* remarked how poor they were, and asked why. He proposed that in the future the seeds should be sown in furrows, much deeper in the earth. In addition to this, *Mama Rosario* sang songs to the seeds. From then onwards, the stems of the maize plants sprouted from the earth at Christmas (Sp. *Navidad*), and later they produced a good harvest of fruits. Don Domingo concluded his tale saying that for these reasons maize has been cultivated successfully until now, and it is always born at Christmastime.

After the libations to maize, the men request that the women sing, and all of those present make another libation. As the men speak the phrases which accompany the libations there is a play upon words, and they question rhetorically which type of libation is most appropriate for the ritual of sowing the food seeds. They emphasise that it is corn beer (*chicha* in Andean Spanish or *k'usa* in Aymara), drunk from bull-cups (called *turuwasu*, a compound term derived from the Sp. words *toro* and *vaso*), wooden drinking vessels with two yoked bulls carved standing in the centre, which must be served (see Plate 2). The bulls at the centre of these bull cups are an echo of the real bull plough-teams, sacred to *Tata San Francisco*, which work the hard ground, preparing it for the planting of the food seeds. There is a sexual innuendo in the men's jokes which attempts to counterbalance the female-dominated task of singing the songs:

_Yatiskapktaw taykanaka,_
_jich"axa turutti similt'añani,_
_wasutakch similt'añani._
_Turutpinxay piri....._  
You know how, ladies,
now, shall we scatter the seeds from _bully_,
or shall we scatter the seeds just from _cups_?
But, it's always from bulls.....
2. The songs

Afterwards, the women open the song cycle to the food products with their song to maize. Their songs are generally sung without a musical accompaniment. Some of the men do accompany them with voice alone, but even then the men imitate the high falsetto of the women's voices. There is no sense of making a harmony of the differences between men's and women's voices. Singing is considered to be a woman's activity and the men take a secondary role. Don Domingo says of women's voices that they alone have the capacity to “irrigate the earth” in anticipation for the sowing.4

PLATE 2: DRINKING FROM THE BULL-CUPS

Once again this is not simply a trope relating the sweetness of women's voices to their capacity to ease a difficult work task. Instead, Don Domingo points out that women's drunken voices have actually been made moist by the alcohol which they have consumed. Female voices, mouth and song are thus inspired by the wet alcohol in their throats. Besides, the alcohol with which the women steep themselves before singing is corn beer, the grains of maize cobs, from previous harvest, transformed into liquid by fermentation. It is from these

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4 Don Domingo's expression is:

*ukat macharatana kax taykanakax warart'iya, ukatxa qarpayiya...*

then the drunken women sing, thus they irrigate....
earlier seed cobs, he says, that the verses and melodies of the songs are inspired and coaxed to emerge from their underworld dwelling. He believes that like the Pachamama, the great mother of the Andean region, whose mouth is the earth itself, the women must become moistened to become fertile. When the women open their mouths to sing, the old seeds inside, in liquid form, give them the inspiration and strength to scatter the new seeds onto the earth:5

**The song to maize**

1. *P'aqulay, p'aqulay, jumapinïway, mamalã*, Red one, red one, it is you truly mamala,
2. *Juma janq'u lak'utanitaway* You are the white-haired one,
3. *K“itiraki jawsani* Who will call, then?
4. *Taqituqut jawsani* Who will call from all sides?
5. *Janq'u lak'utmaxay munatay, mamala* Your white hairs are loved, mamala,
6. *Uka laykuxay jutixa* For this reason they come,
7. *Jumapinixay taqi apaniri, p"axsima* You ever the bringer of all,
8. *(even) moon money,* (even) moon money,
9. *Jumaraki tilantir jawsiri* You, too, the caller of the male llama,
10. *P'aqula....* Red one....

**Personification - the food mamalas**

From the opening line of the first song to maize, what is immediately striking is the character of the personal bond held between human beings, in this case the women of the ayllu, and the food products which they cultivate. There is a sense of an equivalence and reciprocity between human life and plant life which is found not only in the valleys but also in the higher altiplano. In both the discourse of agricultural practice, and in the songs of **similt'aña**, the speaker clearly addresses the food products as if they too were human, using a figure of speech like prosopopeia in English. The first line of the song to maize addresses it thus:

*P'aqulay, p'aqulay, jumapinïway mamalã* Red one, red one, it is you truly mamala

From the very start of the song, the maize is addressed as *p'aqulay(a)*, the “red-one”, the final suffix *-ya*, indicating politeness in Aymara speech. This epithet for maize is described both as a “term of endearment” or appreciation (*q'ayata* in

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5 The watery nature of women's songs is implied in a belief about a neighbouring ayllu, Condo, where the women no longer sing very much. They are ridiculed by the Qaqas who say that they have toads trapped in their mouths!
Aymara or *nombre cariñoso* in Spanish) and a “drinking term” (*umt'añataki*) since these terms of endearment are used particularly during the course of libations and songs. One characteristic of the terms of endearment is that they are personalised. But the line of the song reveals that this “red-one” is not only personified; she is considered to be human-like, and *female*. *P'aqu* is Aymara for a natural tone of red, such as un-dyed wool from a wild vicuña, and the term *p'aqula* is said to derive from the fact that the cornsilk (*p'uñi* in aymara) of ripened maize cobs is like red hair. *P'aqula* thus describes the lady maize who has red-hair.

A morphemic analysis of the Aymara suffixes in this opening line makes this sense of personification clearer. For the woman who sings this line, in saying *jumapinïway* to the maize seeds, uses the second-person personal pronoun, *juma*, augmented by the emphatic suffix *-pini*, the lengthened vowel sound ˚, which verbalises the personal pronoun, the sentence suffix *-wa*, and once again the final suffix *-ya*, indicating politeness. In doing so, she emphasises that the she-maize is not only human-like, but that she is always the *mamala*, or mother; the mother of all the food products.

Bertonio's seventeenth century vocabulary of Aymara from the region of Chucuito in Peru suggests that food crops have been addressed as *mamala* (or its dialectal variation *mamata*), for centuries. His gloss for *mamata* at that time was:

La comida que nos sustenta, atribúyanle como poder divino o cosa semejante....
“the food that sustains us, attributing to it a divine power or something similar”

Bertonio goes on to define *mamatay* as “Madre o Señora, nombre de reverencia”, “Mother or Lady, a name of reverence” (my translation) (BERTONIO, 1612/1984: 213). What Bertonio indicated here in the seventeenth century was the efficacious nature of these terms of address. Even today, through this intimate language, the women are believed to communicate with the food products and to influence their manner of growth and reproduction. Human and non-human entities thus communicate, mediated by women's voices. But what is the specific relationship between the *mamalas* as women of the community and the *mamalas* of the food products? Harris and Bouysse-Cassagne (1987) have described the mamas of the food products as generative archetypes. In the texts of the songs to the food products, there are more clues,
not only to the characteristics of the mamas, but to those of their offspring as well.

The red-haired maize and the white-haired maize

The use of the epithet p'aqulay(a), in the song, for the “red-haired” maize of the valleys implies that Aymara taxonomy makes a distinction between such ritualised terms of endearment as “red-haired mamala”, with the more generic term for maize (tunqu), and all the everyday names of the distinct varieties. This is indeed the case. In daily life, each of the different varieties of maize has its own name. For example, the large-grained maize from the valleys of likina is called sawila (probably derived from the female name Isabela in Spanish), and contrasted with the small-grained maize (r'una tunqu in Aymara, Zea mays) from the highlands, which is called katchu. The meaning of katchu is not clear, although it may be derived from the Aymara root kata-, which describes a seed which continues to remain almost intact after reproduction (see also BÜTTNER and CONDORI CRUZ, 1984: 93). The small-grained maize of the valleys (t"axta sara Qu., “ragged maize”), on the other hand, is used in the system of barter between the people of the valley and those of the highlands, when it is exchanged for highland salt. The better quality large-grained maize of the valleys is sold in the market place, and is called directly “money maize” (qullqi tunqu). Regular sized maize tends to be used at home in valley cooking (tantiyu), while another small-grained variety (muru ch'isi) is used especially for making maize flour (tunqu p"iri).

But even in the “terms of endearment” for maize, there is an implicit idea that two types of maize mamala exist. One is the “red-haired” mamala of the opening lines, and the other is the “white-haired mamala ” of line 2. What does this pairing of maize mamalas imply?

Highlands and valleys

A further clue to the way in which Andeans encode their maize mamalas appears in some later lines of the same song, having to do with the wider role which maize production plays in the valleys of Aymaya. For example, in line 7, maize is referred to as “you ever the bringer of all, (even) moon money” - Jumapinixay taqi apaniri, p"axsima. Here, p"axsima, is probably an abbreviation of p"axsi mama, the “moon mama” (p"axsi is “moon” in Aymara).
“Moon mama” is the ritual term in the region for money, more specifically for raw silver which comes directly from the mines. There is a specific and material reason for this equivalence between maize and money. It is because in the warm valleys of likina, where Aymaya is situated, it is maize, particularly the variety of “money maize” (qullqi tunqu) mentioned earlier, which the peasants take to sell for money in the markets of the principal mining towns, such as Llallagua, outside their communities, in order to obtain a cash income. There they exchange the maize mamala for cash, the “moon money” of line 7 of the song.

By contrast, in the highlands, it is generally potatoes which people take to the markets to sell. In Qaqachaka it is always the particular varieties of “black-girl” (ch'iyar imilla) and “white-girl” (janq'u imilla) potatoes, which people took traditionally to sell in the Oruro mining towns of Avicaya, Antiquera, Poopo, and Challapata, as well as further afield to the mining town of Llallagua. And in Qaqachaka, as we might expect, these particular varieties of potatoes even have the ritual name of p"axsiman, “moon mama”.

Qaqas say that their largest potatoes are “money” and should not be eaten. And when they take their large potatoes to sell in the market, they say that they shall become “enamoured of the moon mama”. Once again there is a reference to two mamalas, but this time to the “potato mamala” and the “moon mama”. And this time the two mamalas “shall become enamoured” for a money transaction to take place.

Not only are there references in the maize song to financial transactions within the regional market towns where the different crops are grown. There are also references to a much wider set of exchange transactions of barter which took place traditionally between the valleys of Aymara and the distant highlands. One reference to the system of exchange barter between valleys and highlands, a little more esoteric, is the evocation of maize in line 8 of the song as “you, too, the caller of the male llama”- jumaraki tilantir jawsiri. Here the male llama is called by its “term of endearment” as tilantiru (from Sp. delantero), the “leading-one”. In the valleys, as Don Domingo relates, their belief is that maize

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6 Tristan Platt, personal communication.
7 See also HARRIS, 1987.
8 Don Enrique Espejo of Qaqchaka told us:
   Jach'a ch'ujinakar aka p"axsimaw. janiw maq'añati, uka qullqiw siw.
   To the large potatoes, this is moon mama, don't eat them, that is money, they say.
9 P"axsimanti inamurasi - They shall be enamoured of the moon mama.
has the power to call to the male llamas of the altiplano far away, inspiring them to journey the harsh trade route for perhaps hundreds of kilometers to the valleys in order to obtain the maize which grows there.

The puzzling comments about specific exchange transactions as one of “enamouring” between two mamalas has been located within this much wider context of regional exchange transactions in the work of Cassandra Torrico. Torrico (1989) shows how Macha herders view this particular complex of beliefs. Macha is a neighbouring ayllu of Qaqachaka, and Machas, too, walk with their llamas until they come to their own valley lands. (Some Machas even come to a place within easy reach of Don Domingo's community.) The Machas, like the Qaqa, acknowledge that the “red-one” comes from far away, but the rituals of their long journey start from their home base in the highlands, and later focus on their departure home again from the valleys, rather than with their arrival there. Torrico describes how, on his return from the valleys, the leading male llama wears a small bell around his neck, called *sinsiru* (from the Sp. *cincerro*), which makes the sound chillin, chillin. The llama herders say that this small bell calls to the spirit (*animu*) of the maize, in a kind of courting song, beckoning to it as if it were the llama's new bride. They believe that the male llama carries the maize back to his household in the altiplano, as his new wife.

Torrico has analysed the nature of these exchange transactions principally as they are mediated through the textile and colour codes of the woven sacks called *kustala* (Sp. *costal*), a type of sack which has been used for centuries in the region-wide system of transport and exchange of distinct products between highlands and valleys. But her work also illustrates how these exchange transactions are mediated through a ritual language which refers to the “mamas” of the products to be exchanged. Thus the term of endearment for maize as the “red-haired lady” is used not only in the valley zone of maize production. Wider exchange networks are also resonant, on occasions, with these same terms of endearment. She describes how the highland llama herders from Macha use the associated expression *paqu mama*, the “red mother”, to refer to valley maize, and how *paqu mama* makes her appearance in one of the most important transactions between highlands and valley; the trading by exchange barter of salt from the altiplano for maize from the valleys. Each year, thousands of llama herders travel from the highlands with their

\[10\text{*P’aqux yàmas jayat t’aniri - Even the red-one comes from far away.}\]
llama trains loaded with sacks of salt, to trade for maize from the valleys. In her analysis, Torrico has shown how the llama herders of Macha view this transaction in detail from the point of view of highland Quechua speakers, as a relationship between the “glistening-white mama” of salt, \(q"isp i \text{mama} \), with the “red mama” of maize, \(p'\text{aqu mama} \). Another more intimate expression used by the Macha herders for this transaction is that the “white” mama salt has “become enamoured” with the “red” mama maize.

Qaqachaka is also a part of this regional exchange network in the salt route from highlands to valleys, illustrated in one of its ritual names which is Kachikachi, a term for white salt. And the Aymara-speaking herders of Qaqachaka also describe this transaction, like the Machas, in terms of a relationship between the two mamas.\(^{11}\) It is as if the herders in both highland communities, as well as the agriculturalists of the Aymaya valleys, believe that it is only the intimate nature of the relationship between any two products which allows any transaction to take place at all. In both the regional marketing centres of the production zones, where goods are traded for a cash income, as well as the wider context of barter exchanges between highlands and valley, the two items of exchange, maize and cash, potatoes and cash, or maize and salt are each described as “mamas”, and their exchange is described as a female pairing who are “enamoured”.

In the maize song, we saw that there was a play with the idea of two mamas, but there they were expressed as different aspects of the maize itself. One aspect is the “red-haired” maize, the mature cob with her red topknot. The other is a “white-haired” mama, that of line 2 of the song - \(juma \text{ janq'u} lak'ut(a)\text{maxay} \). This proliferation of paired mamas seems to suggest that there exists not only a common cosmogony which orders the relationships of exchange between the different products from highlands and valleys, as Torrico has suggested, but that this cosmogony may also order the inner divisions and taxonomies of each different product at the earlier stage of production. Thus the pairing of mamalas may categorise both the relationship between valley maize and highland salt which are exchanged between different ecological zones, or

\(^{11}\) Don Enrique Espejo of Qaqachaka says, for example:
\(P'\text{aqu mamant} \ q"isp i \text{ mamant(i) inamurasi} \).
The red mother and the white mother are enamoured.
the two different aspects of the maize plant, as the red mama of line 1 and the white mama of line 2 which grow within the same location.

In the case of the “white-haired” mama, it is not clear if the maize referred to is that which has white roots at the base of her maize-silk hair, inside the protective leaves around the cob, or, alternatively, if the maize in question is a tender maize cob, one that is not yet ripe. It seems more plausible that the white-haired mama should be an old lady, and if this is the case, there is a further implication that the two different aspects of the maize plant may signify a relationship of symbolic kinship between a “white-haired” (grand)mother cob in relation to her “red-haired” daughter. There is an analogous relationship of symbolic kinship in the pairing of salt and maize, since the “grandmother” figure is often mentioned in relation to the salt mines, a point which Torrico also makes. And ethnographies from elsewhere suggest that the mother of salt is not only the crone of the mines, but also the mother of the heavens\textsuperscript{12}. A cosmogonic pairing of the two mamas may thus be expressed below in Fig. 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>red-haired maize</th>
<th>white-haired maize</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>red-haired maize</td>
<td>white salt lady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>valley</td>
<td>highland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earth</td>
<td>sky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daughter</td>
<td>mother/grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bride</td>
<td>crone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIG. 1 THE RED MOTHER AND THE WHITE MOTHER**

The highlanders in Qaqachaka are willing to make the necessary sacrifices of their long journeys to obtain valley maize not only to provide for a change from the everyday foods grown in the ayllu, but also to provide an essential ingredient in the feast foods served on important festive occasions, and an essential drink to accompany it, maize beer. And it is most specifically on these festive occasions of eating and drinking maize products that Qaqaqs remember in their libations the gods of the Inka empire, the sun and the moon. Perhaps the reference to the two mamas who become enamoured with each other

\textsuperscript{12} There is some pertinent comparative data from Mexico. In Hunt's discussion of the symbolism of salt, salt is called both “holy woman of the sky” and “divine lady of the sky”, as well as being associated with the grandmother crone figure, who is the charcoal cruncher (Cihuacoatl). The patroness of salt there is Huixtocihuatl, but also the Virgin of the Rosary. (See Hunt, 1977: 107, 232). In Qaqachaka, *Mama Rosario* is the mother of the food seeds.
as they enact a relationship of exchange, as described above, may refer to the memory of the relationship that the Inka and Q"uya had with their subjects? The Inka and Q"uya are frequently described in the chronicles as “loving their wajchas”, the poor folk living on their periphery. It is as if this language of love, of “becoming enamoured” still mediates the memory of exchange between the modern highland and valley peripheries and previous historical centres, such as the Inka centre of Cusco, but through the medium of the spirit and substance of maize.

The twelve-eyed one

The cycle of songs to the food seeds continues with the song to potatoes (ch'uqi), called in ritual language “the one with twelve-eyes” - tunkapayan layrani, sometimes shortened to just tunkapän layrani. The twelve eyes referred to are the potato “eyes”, the growing points of the tubers. It is believed that the potato tubers with the most eyes are the most fertile of all. They are the female potatoes par excellence and their epithet as tunkapän layrani, the “twelve-eyed one”, embodies in a coded form this knowledge about the technologies of potato production and reproduction. When the seed potatoes are put aside over the winter months, people observe them from time to time to see when the new shoots begin to sprout from the eyes. Then they are considered ready to sow.

PLATE 3: PHOTO OF A POTATO MAMALA

13 In Qaqachaka the shortened form of tunka layrani - “with ten-eyes” is used.
The song to potatoes

1 Mamala tunka payani layrani
   Jumapiniway,
   akax muntu apustuluy amukt'ayiri,
   mamalay
   Twelve-eyed mamala
   You truly are the one
   who makes silent this world of the apostles,
   mamalay,

5 Nayansay paya layrakiskiway,
   Jumansti tunka payani,
   Tunkapayan kullakan jisk'ani
   Jumaxa walja sutinitawa,
   Jumawayay walja munatatay,
   Even I am one with only two eyes
   and you have twelve,
   With twelve sisters from younger (to elder)
   You have many names,
   You are much loved,

10 Kawki sarantasas mirinta apasmawa,
    mamala
    Jumapiniway anch"ich"axa,
    paylunakarus manttaxa
    Jumarakiw yut'anaks manq'atatayta,
    Wherever I go, I take you for a foodsnack,
    mamala,
    Jumapiniway anch"ich"axa,
    You truly at this very moment
    enter the townsplaces,
    Jumarakiw yut'anaks manq'atatayta,
    You also invite the various partridges to feed,

15 mamala
    Jumapiniway mamala
    kuntur aqarayiri,
    mamala, ñiña....
    You are truly the mamala
    who makes the condor light with fire
    mother, little girl......

The lines of the song do seem to confirm Murra's suggestion that the
people of the valleys make a contrast between the extra special qualities of
maize as compared to the more everyday qualities of potatoes (MURRA, 1960).
For the lines of the song emphasise above all the importance of potatoes as part
of the daily diet, not only in the countryside but also in the townsplaces (see line
12). Lines 10 to 13 also mention how potatoes are always taken as a foodsnack
(mirinta from the Spanish merienda) everywhere, whether people are travelling
or working their plots of land. Line 3 comments more indirectly that potatoes
“make silent the world of the apostles” - akax muntu apustuluy amukt'ayiri. This
probably refers to the capacity of potatoes to silence people when their mouths
are stuffed full. The sound of the human voice, associated with the presence of
spirit (ispiritu), is thus silenced during this alimentary moment of repletion.

There is a further indication in the song of the history and evolution of the
cultivation of potatoes, which took place originally in the high Andean altiplano.
Line 14 of the potato song mentions how potatoes feed “even the partridges” -
jumarakiw yut'anaks manq'atatayta mamala. It is always a nagging possibility
that a crop of potatoes can be lost to natural predators, such as the partridge.
However, the line of the song makes an implicit reference to the wild variety of
potatoes (\textit{luk'i} and \textit{ap"ar uma}), those which grow at the higher altitudes in the hills, where they are more easily consumed by partridges, the bird-spirits of the hills. These \textit{luk'i} are the original prototype of later domesticated potatoes. They are believed to have been the food of the gentiles (\textit{jintila}) of the time of the \textit{chullpas}, as were wild oats (\textit{awina} from Sp. \textit{avena}), since these people, before the age of the sun, did not know about plant domestication.\textsuperscript{14} Nowadays \textit{luk'i} are only cultivated at the highest altitudes of Qaqachaka to be processed into the freeze-dried potatoes called \textit{ch'uñu}. And whereas maize is remembered in the valleys as the luxury and ceremonial food of the Inkas, the highland Qaqas record that \textit{ch'uñu} was “the food of the Inka”. Could this possibly be a memory of the quantities of freeze-dried potatoes which they had to provide in the past to the Inka storehouses of the region, ready to serve to Inka troops on the march?

\textbf{The lighting of the condor}

Another cultural theme related to the production of potatoes is indicated in the last line of the potato song, “You are truly the mamala who makes the condor light with fire” - \textit{Jumapiniway mamala kuntur aqarayiri}. Throughout the altiplano, there is a web of beliefs concerning the condor and its relationship to the production and reproduction of the food products. In the region of La Paz, for example, there are many myths about the origin of potatoes which feature the condor as a \textit{generative} agent which has the power to transform mere stones into a crop of potatoes (see APAZA M., 1989). In the warm valleys of \textit{likina}, however, the condor seems to be not only a generative agent for foodstuffs, but also a possible \textit{destructive} agent. Don Domingo explains that in his village, when the food supply is about to finish, people say that the condor has grasped it.\textsuperscript{15} It is for this reason, he says, that the last line of the song refers to the condor in this way.

\textsuperscript{14} Don Domingo's own words are these:
\begin{quote}
\textit{Laya jintilinakax awina puquski},
\textit{The gentiles of long ago, producing oats,}
\textit{jan uywata, ukaw maq'apaki si janti},
\textit{without domesticating them, only that is their food, isn't it so, they say,}
\textit{maya ch'uqi ap"arum saña, akan luk'ijama patxan aliski},
\textit{there is a potato called ap"aruma, this is like luk'i, it is growing above,}
\textit{ukaw maq'apan si jintilinaka},
\textit{those were their foods, they say, the gentiles.}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{15} Don Domingo's own words are:
\begin{quote}
\textit{Kuntur aqarayir(i) siw, ukax manq'ats pist'xix,}
\end{quote}
A brief linguistic digression makes this reasoning more clear. *Kuntur aqarayiri* is an expression which describes the agent which “lights the condor”. *Aqaña* is the simple verb which means “to light” or “to illuminate”, describing the action of lighting candles or a fire. The more complex form of *aqarayaña* in the expression above has two additional suffixes: -ra- which indicates an action that occurs in series (such as lighting a row of candles), and the causative suffix -ya- which also introduces a human element into the verbal form - that which “causes” or “makes” the action of lighting in series. The more complex verb thus describes both the action of the gradual spread of light, and implies that a human is the causative element of the action. Once again, the important distinction between human and non-human in Aymara thought becomes blurred in the personalising of ritual language. This sense of personification is further confirmed by the use of the nominalising suffix -iri in the expression above, which converts the verb form of *aqarayaña* into the “actor”, *aqarayiri*, the “person” who is accustomed to realise the action of making light in series.

In all of these expressions, both the causative element and the actor in question may be, ambiguously and interchangeably, the mamala spirit of the potatoes or the condor. But this metaphorical use of the condor may just as well allude to human intervention in the processes of food production and food depletion, most especially to the human mamalas of the ayllu, since there are certain ritual contexts when people assume the identity of condors. The drinking name for the house, for example, is “the nest of the condor and the falcon”, or more simply “the mother nest”. Like the inside of the earth, the house is a place where a fire glows and illuminates within. We have described elsewhere how “condor” is a ritual guise for certain in-marrying male affines, those that come to the house and illuminate it, by bringing dung for fuel, and the tallow (or nowadays kerosene) for house lamps. And we have suggested elsewhere that the in-marrying condor affines are often viewed ritually as “Inkas”, as opposed to the indigenous population of the place.\(^\text{16}\)

\(^{16}\) See ARNOLD n.d. 2.
These analogies between condor and human extend to the food products. The condor as *generative* agent is also known in the valley lands. When the potato harvest is growing well in the ground, there is another associated idiomatic expression which says that the condor has grasped them and made them light up.\(^{17}\) In this second case, the expression implies that the condor is making the food products, such as potatoes, grow in abundance, and that this abundant growth is like the gradual spread of light in the ground. In the expression *ch'uqi achuntxchixay*, meaning “the potatoes grow”, the movement suffix -*nta-* modifies the verb root *achuña*, “to produce”, indicating a movement inwards. In this case, it describes the growth of potatoes inside the earth. There may be a play on these related ideas in the last line of the song, where there is the usual invocation to the mamala of potatoes, followed by the contrasting epithet of *ñiña*, “daughter” (from the Spanish *niña*). The epithet may refer to potatoes simply as the daughter of the mother-maize, her “girl-child”, or *imill wawa*, but if this were the case, we would expect the term *imilla* to be used in the song. The alternative use of the epithet *ñiña* does suggest that there is a further possibility of a play on words, whereby *ñiña* in the last line of the song imitates the Aymara term for “fire” itself, *nina*. If this is so, then the growth of potato tubers in the ground is perceived as if it were like the kindling of a fire which lights little by little inside the earth. And it is the condor, specifically, which has the power to kindle or to extinguish this underground fire. It is this underground fire, too, which not only gives the potatoes the power to grow, but also later, at the harvest, gives its strength to those who consume them.

At a wider level, the condor who comes to light the inside realm of the house, but who has the ambiguous capacity to make the earth both productive and yet ready to loose the food produce harvested from it, could be compared once again to a memory of Inka conquest in the region. There is evidence that in-marrying Inka affines formed real historical marriage alliances in the regions of

\(^{17}\) Don Domingo says:
*Ukat uk yasta juyranak katusti,*  
And afterwards its done, s/he (the condor) grasps the food products,  
*ukat ch'uqi achuntxchixay,*  
then the potatoes are already grown,  
*uk katji, ukat kunturi aqarayxi,*  
s/he (the condor) grasps them, for that reason the condor has made them light up,  
*sas uk si.*  
saying, they say that.
Charcas and Quillacas as a part of their programme of conquest. But they also extracted food produce in tribute from the ayllus under their domain. In the Lake Titicaca region mentioned earlier, the memory of the Inka-condor may perhaps be slightly more benign, since vast areas which were once mere “stones” were brought under cultivation in state-sponsored terracing and irrigation systems.

**The twelve sister potatoes**

The song mentions another term of endearment and epithet for potatoes - *tunkapayan kullakan jisk'ani* - “with twelve sisters from younger (to elder)”.¹⁸ Don Domingo explained to us the particular use of this term of address to refer to potatoes of all the food products. In the case of the other common food crops, he said, there are many less varieties, so that, with just a few names, either daily terms or terms of endearment, all of these possible varieties could be included.¹⁹ However, in the case of potatoes, it is different. There are so many varieties of potato that it is impossible to include all of them in a few terms. For this reason, potatoes are called “the twelve sisters from younger to elder”, and both the all-inclusive number “twelve”, and the generic term of “sisters” are said to include every possible variety.

This importance, which Don Domingo stresses, of including absolutely all of the different varieties of the food products in the songs and libations, also reveals the efficacious nature of the act of naming in the reproduction of the products. Only by naming each of the separate elements of the Aymara universe, in this way, are they believed to reproduce and regenerate their species.

**The maize mama and the potato mama**

Don Domingo emphasised here that the maize mama and the potato mama together are considered to form a pair, the first pair to open the cycle of songs to the food products. Once again, what does this pairing seem to signify? In his

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¹⁸ The term *kullak jisk'ata* means literally “the sister(s), from the smallest”, however, we have translated the expression as the “sisters from elder to younger” because, in ritual language, the three sisters “from elder to younger” is the most common expression.

¹⁹ There is also the alternative system of classification of the food products by colour, whereby each variety is categorised as either red (*wila*), black (*ch'iyara*) or white (*janq'u*). With just these three colour terms, once again it is possible to include all of the different varieties.
dialect of Aymara, Don Domingo uses the expression *ispus ispusa* to describe this pairing of maize and potatoes, a term presumably derived from the Spanish *esposa esposa* “wife wife” or *esposas* - “wives”, even though the female gendering of this word as “partners” is unknown in spoken Spanish. Don Domingo's expression suggests that maize and potatoes are considered to be *female* partners, another pair of food mamalas; but most specifically an *all-female* married couple. One is reminded of Platt's work on the meaning of the Quechua term *yanantin* (PLATT, 1978), in which he implies that two women as well as two men may be considered as such a pair in complementary opposition.

However, Don Domingo also gives a more mundane reason for this pairing. As he explains, potatoes are *ispus ispusa*, “partners” with maize, “as the two always accompany each other in the daily portion of soup” (*lawa*). He says that it is inside the daily soup that the two food ingredients “make partners” (in Aymara *ispus ispusayipï*). That even when maize is peeled before cooking, potatoes must always be laid at her side to accompany her. It is only after he had acknowledged this principal all-female pair of maize and potatoes in the cosmogony of the food products at the opening of the song cycle that Don Domingo continued with his performance, and the remaining products entered the song cycle turn by turn.

**Wheat, the boy-child**

In Don Domingo's community, the song to the potatoes is followed by the song to wheat (*tiriju* from Sp. *trigo*). Wheat does have a female-gendered term of endearment as *Doña Teresa* (*Tuyña Tirisa*), which is probably a borrowing into Aymara from the Spanish words for lady (Sp. *doña*) and an Aymarised play with words, from the Spanish term for wheat, *trigo* - to *tiriju* - to *tirisa*. However, in the song, a *male*-gendering is used throughout, in the term of endearment of *yuqall wawa*, the “boy-child”. First of all the people present make a libation to the “boy-child”, and afterwards the women say:

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20 First the Spanish term, *trigo*, is re-phonemicised in the Aymara pronunciation as *tiriju*, with the appropriate shifting of the consonant clusters. The ritual term, *Tuyña Tirisa*, follows more closely the Aymara consonant shift.

21 Here the nominal suffix *-t'a* in *similt'apxata* indicates politeness, and may be translated as “please scatter the seeds”.

Bay, ch'allt'apmjay, awkinaka,  
nà ukaru similt'añarakïwa...  
Well, make a libation then, gentlemen,  
I shall scatter seeds to that one as well....

to which the men reply:  
¡Taykanak sum similt'apxata!22  
Mothers, please scatter the seeds well!

Afterwards the women begin to sing.

**Song to the wheat**

1  *Yuqall waway, yuqall waway,*  
    *Jumaway ŋũũ qalluta*  
    Boy-child, boy-child.  
    You are the boy offspring,  
    You are the boy offspring,

2  *Q'ana wiran sarnaqkiñansay,*  
    *Jumapiniw wistiri*  
    Even in the real life that we lead,  
    You are he who always dresses,

5  *Nayapini simintir(i)yar mantxasa*  
    *Jumapiniway sayxatista*  
    I truly shall enter the cementery  
    (but) you will always stand above me  
    Boy-child mestizo,  
    You have two names,  
    father and boy child,

10  *Tunka payani, jumax surti jawsiri,*  
    *Tatal, ŋũũ.......*  
    Of the twelve, you are the caller of luck,  
    Father, boy.......  

**Wheat, the mestizo**

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22 Compare Lorca's lines in “*Bodas de Sangre*” - “Tu abuelo dejó un hijo en cada esquina. Eso me gusta. Los hombres, hombres; el trigo, trigo” (LORCA, 1957:14).
The maleness of wheat is reiterated in various epithets throughout the song. The opening lines of the song address wheat as the boy-child (yuqall wawa) and boy-offspring (ñiñu qallu). Then later in lines 8 and 9 two more male names are paired - tatalay, ñiñu qallu - father and boy-offspring. Line 7 elaborates the term of endearment for wheat as yuqall waway mistisa, “boy-child mestizo”. Wheat is the first food product to enter the song cycle which does not have an indigenous origin, for wheat was brought to the Andes from Europe by the Spanish conquerors. For this reason, perhaps, it is called mestizo, the “mixed breed” of the two cultures.

Furthermore, the song throughout emphasises not only the maleness of wheat, but also its immortality. These two themes seem to be closely related in a mixing of Andean and Spanish Catholic religious beliefs about the reproductive cycle of vegetation, which we shall only summarise briefly here. Lines 3 and 4 provide a brief clue to the way in which the relationship between the new vegetation and the earth is perceived, for they seem to refer to wheat as the new vegetation which “dresses” the bare earth as it grows - jumapiniw wistirita - “you are he who always dresses” (wistiña, a borrowing from Sp. vestir, “to dress”). On the one hand, there is a belief that the bare earth, personified as a female being, becomes dressed with the new vegetation as her covering. Don Domingo uses the verb tirnirt’asxi - “she becomes dressed” (derived from the Spanish terno, a suit) to refer to this dressing of the female earth with vegetation.25

23 In addressing the animals, too, the sheep is called mistisita, “little mixed-one”, after its mixed ancestry.
24 The Qaqas also say that the female earth becomes dressed with red (panti) when the earth is turned at the first ploughing, as the earth appears to turn red in colour (see also ARNOLD, 1987, 1989 and n.d.1).
25 Don Enrique Espejo of Qaqachaka expresses this idea in the following way:

Yusa milajru uchi, ukat asta taqi kunas utji, asta manq"a uraqi,
God places a miracle, for this reason there is everything, inside the earth,
piru, kunas sattans(a) ukat yasta ukan uka achachinaka saskiri manq"an jiwjich sas,
but, even that being sown, for this reason in there, those ancestors used to say,
have died inside (the earth), saying,
ukat ast mistuni, yaq"at wawatati,
afterwards they will come forth, they become babies anew,
ukat taqi manq"as utji.
for this reason there are all types of food.
Uk"am amuyataw, layra jaqinakax uk"am saskiri.
Another set of beliefs relate the sprouting of the new green vegetation, at the beginning of the harvest season, to the resurrection (risuriksyuna) of God. They say that in the dark days of lent (ch'amak uru) before Easter, god has descended into the underworld (manq"apacha), battled with the devils there, and then placed a miracle (milajru from Sp. milagro) in the earth. In an Andean reworking of the passion of Christ, the miracle is regarded as both the resurrection of God and the resurrection of the food crops. And with the new ascent of God after this miracle has taken place, the dead seeds too are able to burst through the earth as the new food crops, perceived as the babies (wawas) of the earth. It is only because of the resurrection of God that the new food crops may be harvested.26

Line 5 continues the theme of death and resurrection, for it contrasts the vulnerability and mortality of human life with the immortality of wheat: “I shall always have to enter the cemetery, you will always stand above me.” This line alludes to the custom of placing food products derived from wheat upon the graves of the recent dead in the ayllu cemetery every year at the Feast of the Dead at Todos Santos. On this occasion, bread made from wheatflour in the form of bread-babies (t'ant'a wawas), and other food products, are placed above the grave on the steps of the makeshift tumpulus, “ladders to heaven” formed from simple household chairs and tables lashed together with ropes. A real or classifactory son-in-law of the deceased carries the tumpulu to the cemetery on his back, to place on the grave. There, the tumpulus are covered with black mourning cloths and laid with offerings. These offerings expose the contrast between the mortality of the human dead in the earth grave below with the continuity of agricultural production, represented most importantly by the wheatbread babies from the new harvest on the ladder above the grave.

Moreover, this contrast is not only evoked as a silent one of contemplation. For it is the wheatbread babies which are used in order to compel the mourners to recite prayers for the deceased, or to keen lamentations (q'asaña) for their lost one, so that human voices, nourished by the wheatbread, may continue to “name” aloud the deceased, months or even years after their departure in silence from the world of the living.

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26 Luke viii: 11
3. A pause and some food for thought

Food as the spirit babies

Before Don Domingo moved on to sing the other food songs, he paused for breath, to chew some coca leaves and make some more libations with us. As we rested, he reminded us about the meanings of the food songs in the wider context of Aymara religion and metaphysics. He indicated how the song to wheat had introduced the idea that all of the food crops are considered to be the offspring of the earth. But the song had also introduced a contrast in gender between these manifest food offspring: between wheat which is perceived as a “boy-child” (the yugall wawa of line 1 and the Spanish-derived form, ñiñu, from niño, in lines 5, 8 and 10), and potatoes which are perceived as a “girl-child” (ñiña). As the food plants are addressed as mamalas, so the foodseeds planted in the earth, as well as the new food crops harvested from the earth are believed to be her offspring, the “babies” (wawas Sp. guaguas) of the Virgin Earth. Since it is important to understand something of this plant metaphysics, before the magic of the songs can be understood in their entirety, we shall examine more about these beliefs briefly here.

In many conversations with us, Don Domingo has related the presence of “spirit” (ispiritu from Sp. espíritu) in the world to the existence of life and the capacity for speech. He has described how “spirit” enters a baby at birth, giving it the capacity for human speech announced by its first cry of birth, and then at death, leaving behind just a silent corpse. His view of speech includes not only the first cry of human babies, but also, by analogy, the cry of the food babies. It is as if the Andean interpretation of logos, perhaps developed after centuries of hearing Christian preaching, relates the “word of god” not only to the sacrament of speech and song, but also to the sacrament of food.
The women's songs of *similt'aña*, too, are an amalgam of these two sacramental aspects, for they initiate life through a mixing of both sound and seed. According to the Andean metaphysics described by Don Domingo, the songs are believed to be a manifestation of the flow of spirit as breath, which mixes with the transformed seeds in the fermented beer which the women have drunk, in order to fertilise the new seeds sown in the earth. The new food-seeds are in turn nourished and watered by the mixture of watery breath and word-seeds which the women cry out in their drunken song verses. Through these associations, the very source of life, the “word in the beginning” (from the first chapter of John's gospel), is applied 'literally', by the oral culture of Aymaya, to refer to the sounds which announce the creation of life, and practically by this agricultural community to refer to the production of food. For them, the foodseed is the source of life, in the same way that “the seed is the word of God”. Word and seed are both viewed, according to Andean beliefs, as an aspect of the spirit of God. But, most importantly, for Andeans like Don Domingo, spirit is not divorced from material existence, from the necessities of the body for food and drink.

In the ritual language of Don Domingo, it is apparent that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity has been reinterpreted, too. The Biblical God is at one and the same time considered to be the Father creator, the Son and the Holy Ghost as

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27 John x: 30.
spirit. (“I and my father are one,” says John’s gospel.) In one aspect of its Andean reworkings, Don Domingo acknowledges the godhead (yusa from Sp. dios) as the Father sun (Inti Tala) and his offspring son as Jisukiristu (Jesus Christ) or as “spirit” (ispiritu). In each case, father and son are considered to be inseparable. Another related aspect of the Andean interpretation of the Trinity is that the food-seed is associated in certain contexts with male substance, like the Father creator. Seeds are called muju or jata, terms used for semen, besides the term similla, a borrowing into Aymara from the Spanish semilla. The Andean notion of miracle (milajru) is also associated in certain contexts with the fertilisation of the food-seeds by male substance, since the successful production of a new crop harvest is believed to depend on the descent of God during the dark days of Easter into the underworld, to place a miracle in the earth. In other contexts, though, and unlike Christian Trinitarian doctrine, there is a parallel Andean doctrine about the creation of the food crops which has a female-gendered trinity. In this case, the moon mother (p”axsi mala) is associated with spirit, the earth is creatrix, the Pachamama which nourishes and eventually gives a miraculous birth to the food-crop babies at harvest-time, while the food-babies themselves as viewed as the spirit offspring (See Fig. 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male Trinity</th>
<th>Female Trinity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Sun) Father (Inti tala)</td>
<td>Miracle (milajru)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son (Jisukiristu)</td>
<td>Food crop (wawa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy ghost (Ispiritu)</td>
<td>Spirit (Ispiritu)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIG. 2 ANDEAN DOCTRINE AND ANDEAN TRINITIES

Like human babies, or women singing, the food crops, too, are believed to have the capacity to voice sound when spirit is present. The resulting harvest crop, as the offspring of the virgin earth, is believed to be a manifestation of

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28 An interesting cross-cultural reference here is the use of the term “ejaculation” by Malinowski, to translate the act of hurling of magical words in the direction of the desired object in Coral Gardens and Their Magic, 1935.

29 This Andean belief about how the spirit of maize is embedded within the cob itself is evident in the common popular drama about the death of Atawallpa, the last Inka king. During the course of the drama, Francisco Pizarro shows the Inka prisoner a Bible, which he holds to his ear but then throws it to the ground in disgust as it does not “speak” to him. Later in the play a cob of maize is passed in silence between those present, and this time, yes, it does have the capacity to communicate spirit, but according to an Andean metaphysics, even in silence.
spirit. So, too, is the capacity of the new food products to “cry” when they are born, and to cry at any moment if they are uncared for. Don Domingo has abundant stories about abandoned potato or bean skins, tossed aside by those who have eaten their fruits, which cry in their isolation, and must be picked up and cared for, or eaten in their entirety, in order to comfort and silence them. It is as if the food products, like humans, cry at the important rites of passage when their constituent parts are dismembered, for example when mother and child are separated at birth, and when body and soul are separated at death.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>body</th>
<th>food seed</th>
<th>(muju)</th>
<th>1st trinity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>food crop</td>
<td>(wawa)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spirit</td>
<td>(ispiritu)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spirit</td>
<td>as seed</td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd trinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as harvest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as the cry of birth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soul</td>
<td>named person</td>
<td>(suti)</td>
<td>3rd trinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soul</td>
<td>(ajayu)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shadow soul</td>
<td>(janayu)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIG. 3 OTHER ANDEAN TRINITIES

In another variation upon the Christian Holy Trinity, each food product is believed to comprise three different aspects. According to Don Domingo, each element of the natural world, like the Christian Trinity, has a tripartite nature. A person is believed to be constituted by three aspects or “souls”: the named individual (suti), the soul (ajayu) and its shadow soul (janayu) (Fig. 3). Analogically, the cultivated plants are believed to be comprised of three different aspects: the seed itself (muju), the body of the plant (ali) as the material vegetation, and its spirit offspring (ispiritu). In the case of potatoes, the seed is the tuber, the material offspring is the plant itself, and the spirit is the fruit. In the case of maize, the seed is the cob with its grains, the plant comprises the stem and leaves, and the spirit is in the cornsilk. And in the case of wheat, the seed is the bare grain, the plant comprises the stem and green vegetation, and the spirit is the awn. (See Fig. 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>potato</th>
<th>maize</th>
<th>wheat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>seed</td>
<td>potato tuber (ch'uqi)</td>
<td>maize cob (tunqu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>wheat seed grain (muju)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30 See, for example, Calancha, 1976: 931-935 described by Ossio, 1988: 551-553.
In every example mentioned above by Don Domingo, spirit is associated most with that part of a person or a plant which is animated by breath. In human life, one aspect of spirit is believed to reside in the person's name (suti), their unique term of address named in speech and voiced by breath. Whereas in plants, spirit is believed to reside in the part which scatters or blows in the wind: the seed head of potatoes, the cornsilk of maize, or the bare grains of wheat. It is as if through the animation of breath or wind material form is constituted and made animate at birth or naming, only to disintegrate later into its constituent elements and essences at death, to be scattered apart and reproduced elsewhere. This tripartite classification adds another dimension to the naming of the mature maize cob in the first song as p'aguila, the red-haired lady, for it reiterates not only her femaleness, but also alludes to her identity as the spirit-offspring of the plant.

This nexus of beliefs perhaps clarifies, too, the particularly Andean obsession with the power of granular things. It also sheds light on the obsessive work tasks of Andean food processing which involve the relentless peeling of the skins from potatoes, the shells from beans, and any grains from their husks, and the subsequent pounding on stone mortars of soaked freeze-dried potatoes or maize, wheat, barley or quinua grains to make a fine powdered flour before cooking or eating.

**The sun father and the moon mother**

Aspects of this complex metaphysics are just as evident in contemporary myths about the origin of the foodstuffs as they were in their pre-Columbian counterparts. Don Domingo described to us two different origin myths, one

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31 In Don Domingo’s words:

*Uka chullpa timputpinixay uka Mariyaw wawa uchunuqatayna siwa.*
From the time of the chullpas they say Maria was the person who placed the baby there.
*Taqi walja sutini, ukatak mistu, siwa*
Every type, with their many names, came just from this, they say.
*Taqi uk'amapa aka muntunxa,*
concerning the origin of *maize* and one concerning the origin of *potatoes*. The two myths articulate something of the different ways in which male and female substance are cycled. They do so with reference to the Inka deities, the sun and the moon. In the region, men say they are descended from the male deity, the sun, and women are descended from the female deity, the moon. The two food products, maize and potatoes here seem to encode these different gendered origins. The maize myth concerns the sun and an Andean notion of “miracle”, whereas the potato myth concerns the moon and breath as manifestations of “spirit”. The opposing aspects of these two myths implies that the origin of maize and the origin of potatoes deal with the reproduction and regeneration of different aspects of ancestral substance. In the case of maize, this seems to be associated with transmission of male substance passed down from the sun father, and in the case of potatoes with the transmission of female substance, passed down from the moon mother.

In Don Domingo's myth about the origin of *maize*, the Sun Father, *Inti Tala*, appears in an Andean context of the making of miracles. People ask him what he is going to cultivate, and he replies “I'm going to cultivate stones”. Before this time, there were apparently no stones on the face of the earth, not even for making the foundations of houses. In the myth, too, the figure of the sun has many of the characteristic attributes of the Inka. The sun myth is said to be the origin not only of magical stones, but also of miracles. In later dialogues, the sun father is asked what he is cultivating and he replies - “maize, wheat, barley, and the other food products associated with the sun”. The myth recounts how, because of the sun's power, the miraculous stones have become transformed into these various food products, which are found already growing in the fields the following day. In the myth, the whole period of gestation of nine months for maize cultivation has become compressed into one single solar day.

In his myth about the origin of *potatoes*, on the other hand, a female genetrix appears as *Mama Mariya*. She is clearly an allusion to the Christian...
Virgin Mary, but also, according to Don Domingo, to that aspect of the Pachamama, the Andean great mother, which dwells in the heavens and is associated with the moon. She is said to have made the first potato by “blowing” upon the face of the earth. All of the different varieties of potatoes, with their different names, are said to have come from this one. In doing so, Mama Mariya is said to have brought them to light. Mama Mariya is described by Don Domingo as the “spirit” of the Pachamama.

**Talking to the earth, talking to the mountains**

Don Domingo indicated that the way in which the food mamas are addressed as if they were persons in the food songs is a part of the much wider context of the ritual language of production when the earth and mountains too are personified. The Pachamama as matrix, as the virgin earth and female genetrix, is addressed in the ritual language of cultivation as a woman, the food crops are addressed as her children, and the mountains as her husband. Don Domingo emphasises that in all the phases of agricultural work, nothing is done in silence, the earth is always addressed as if she were a person.

When the earth is first turned with the new ploughing, the earth is requested to dress herself in a red mantle, since the freshly turned earth is red. The bridal and reproductive earth, like the bridal maize in the earlier food song, is once again a “red”-mamala. In the contemporary libations and addresses made at the time of sowing, the new food seeds, as babies, are said to be grasped inside the girdle (k'inch'u) of the female-gendered earth, referring to the girdle worn by women around their waists. Libations are made so that the seeds may be taken inside to suckle there - “Let us give suck,” űnt'asiñani, they say. People in general are said to suckle from the earth all their lives, when they nourish themselves from the earth. K'inchu'jarxiv, they say, meaning “It is gripped inside the waitsband”, as the seed enters the earth. The mountain husbands are requested to send the rains of the rainy season which will fertilise the earth, bringing forth the liquid red soil which

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32 Similarly, Don Enrique of Qaqachaka says:
Primir kalltaskasas, ba yparlxayapintanxa,
First beginning, we always talk to her first,
parlxaya sapinipi jaqintjampini parl'tasi sapin lurktanxa.
talking really, talking as if with a person, we work.

33 For example in Provincia Ingavi, Departmento de La Paz.
will grasp and nourish the food seeds inside. Then the female girdle “grasps” the seed baby inside like a placenta. After producing her food crop offspring for a whole cycle of crop rotation, the virgin earth is believed to have become like a tired old grandmother (awicha), and to need to rest for several years of fallow. Only after a rest of several years is she said to have become a young woman (palachu) again. (See also ARNOLD, 1987 and 1988.)

**Plant growth by “breath”, and plant growth by “blood”**

The gendered distinctions in the myths between maize, associated with the Sun Father, and potatoes, associated with the Moon Mother, seems to imply something about their differential modes of reproduction, and the myths seem to imply such a difference in the contrast between plant origin by “miracle” and plant origin by “breath”. It is similar to the gendered distinction in the songs between wheat as the “boy-child” and potatoes as the “girl-child”, and, once again, what seems to be implicit in these gendered categories is the distinct way in which each product is believed to reproduce.

First, we shall examine the case of potatoes, the “girl-child”. Although it is possible for potatoes to reproduce from the seeds in the new potato fruit heads (mak'ank'u) at the head of the stems of the potato plant, in common practice potatoes reproduce from the small seeding tubers (ch'ugi) set aside after the harvest each year. When these tubers are planted, the new roots which have sprouted from the nodes of the seed tuber “eyes” generate a number of new tuber offspring (the wawas) around the original genetrix. According to Aymara belief, the “mother” tuber (tayka) gives birth to her various identical “daughter” offspring (imill wawas). This form of reproduction is what Western science might view as a form of “cloning”. Another distinct characteristic of potato reproduction is that it takes place underneath the ground, in the darkness and dampness of the earth. Because of this, Qaqas call potatoes “inside food” (manq"a manq'a). Inside this underworld realm, the potato tubers are believed to be influenced at this stage in their development more by the fertilising rains which turn the soil red. The red and muddy soil, like women's blood, is believed to grasp the baby seed, and to fertilise it. Women have their blood according to a lunar rhythm, and in Aymara it is called “moon blood” - p"axsi wila (See ARNOLD, 1988). In the myth about the origin of potatoes, it is the moon goddess, Mama Mariya, who breathes spirit into her new offspring, engendering
predominantly girl-children. In the earlier song to the potatoes, the condor's association with a fertilising underground fire also seems to allude to this chthonic and predominantly female realm.

By contrast, wheat reproduces from the grains (muju) of its seed heads, from the ripe wheat-ears with their husked and awned grains which grow high above the ground on the plant stem. And Qaqas call wheat, appropriately enough, “above food” (patxa manq’á). When the wheat-ears are harvested, threshed and winnowed, some of these grains are set aside each year as seeds to be re-sown the following season. But apart from any human intervention in the selective process, the natural action of the wind always loosens the dry and ripe grains from the heads of the standing swatches of wheat, letting some grains fall to the ground as shack among the stubble. In both cases, the awns on the seed-grains stake them to the earth, where they later sprout and grow. Another difference in the case of wheat as opposed to potatoes is that the ripening process depends much more on the light and warmth of the sun rather than the power of the moon and the fertilising rains. It is for this reason, perhaps, that wheat is one of the products mentioned beside maize in the myth of the sun god, and that the cosmogony evoked by this form of reproduction is the relationship between a father (the sun) and his wind-born spirit son (the boy-child).

The trinitarian classification of the wheatplant, whereby the seed is the grain, the offspring is the stem, and the spirit is manifest in the awn, also seems to confirm the wind-born manner of its reproduction. The wind, too, as a fertilising agent, is believed to be another aspect of the force of niño, the “boy-child” associated with spirit. With a Christian influence, both the fertilising agent of the wind, and the offspring in flesh, the boy-child wheat, are perceived as aspects of spirit. There is another associated belief that when people eat grains like wheat, that of all the food products, these give a greater strength to their consumers. This strength is described as the force of niño, the same word used for “boy-child” in Spanish. Here, however, the term niño refers to this spiritual force (fuerza del espíritu in Spanish), a form of energy which moves with the wind, and is associated with the air itself (aire in Spanish, ayri in Aymara). This force of niño has the capacity to make the human body perspire with vitality when it is present. This same spirit of niño is believed to engender the actual birth process of a human baby, when spirit finally descends into the pelvic region of the mother during pregnancy giving a jolt of energy which
passes from the base of the spinal column into the uterine passages. The first cry of the child at birth, which announces to the world its capacity for human speech, is also attributed to the power of *niño*.

4. The songs continued

Oca, the weaver

After this diversion, Don Domingo continued with the rest of the sequence of songs. After the first pairing of maize and potatoes in the first two songs, the second pair of food crops makes their appearance. Wheat, the “boy-child”, is paired with another tuber, this time with oca (*apilla* in Aymara and *uqa* in Quechua, *Oxalis tuberosus*). Unlike the case in highland Qaqachaka, however, oca is given a predominantly female gendering in the songs of the valleys. The principal epithet and term of endearment for oca is *sawu sawu*, which could be glossed as “weaving weaving”, but with the specific meaning of an unfinished textile still hung on its loom. *Sawu sawu* can also be glossed as “loom loom”. The association of oca with weaving is related to both its form and its colours, and emerges in the lines of the song:

**Song to oca**

1. **Mamalay sawu sawuri, mamalay,**
   *Mamalay who weaves, mamalay,*
   **Jumawayay pachamamat(a),**
   *You are she who learns from Pachamama*
   **t'alla mamat yatiqastaxay mamala,**
   *and from t'alla mama, mamala,*
   **Wiyajiruy wiyajiruy satāta,**
   *You are called traveller, traveller,*

5. **Jumarakí wallqip sawuri, mamalay,**
   *You are she who weaves the coca bag, too, mamalay,*
   **Jumarakí istall iñaqiri, mamala,**
   *You are she who watches the coca cloth,*
   **Munatataway,**
   *You are cherished,*
   **kuluraruy saltani satataway,**
   *(and) called the one with coloured designs,*
   **mamala ñiña.**

The lines of the song mention how oca has learnt to weave not only from the Pachamama herself, but also from the *t'alla mama*, another ritual term for the Virgin Earth. Like the closely personalised relationship of equivalence between the mamalas of the ayllu and the mamalas of the food products, the term *t'alla mama*, perhaps best translated as “Lady”, introduces a semantic continuity between the earth and her human representative, since *t'alla mama* is
also the ceremonial name of the female ayllu leader of the local ethnic group, *jilanq mala*, the wife of the *jilanqu*.

Another of the terms of endearment for oca is simply “the weaver” - *savuri*. The close relationship, or intertextuality, between the earth as Pachamama, or *t'alla mama*, agricultural production and the activity of weaving is revealed not only in the form and symbolism of the woven cloth and its designs but also in the act of weaving. At the very moment when a woman first makes contact between her loom and the earth, as she pounds the loomstakes into the ground, she calls to the Pachamama to receive her offering. She sings weaving songs, and makes libations mentioning the colours and names of the designs (*saltas*) that she will weave. The earth is commonly perceived as the loom, and the food products with the designs woven into the cloth, in women's weaving discourse. The cultivated fields in the ritual language of other parts of the altiplano are described specifically as *gipa mama*, “weft mama”, and people and everything they produce as the weft. The act of ploughing furrows in the cultivated fields is likened to the act of weaving the weft threads into and out of the warp which is the earth, leaving the planted seeds behind, embedded in the textile designs. (For more detail of these discussions see also ARNOLD, 1988.)

In the song to oca, the women sing that oca knows how to weave the small coca bag (*wallqipu*) carried by men, and that oca also “observes” the small coca cloth (*istalla*) carried by women. The specific relationship between oca and those weavings which contain coca leaves may be due to the fact that these weavings are characterised by distinct designs (*saltas*) and the use of particular colours (*kulura*). This is confirmed in line 9 of the song which mentions another ritual term for oca, *kuluraruy saltani*, “that with a coloured design”. And tubers of oca often do have a flat form, something like a human hand with a graining of bright colours, perhaps like a weaver's hand full of coloured threads.

Yet another term of endearment for oca, sung by the women in line 4, is *wiyajiru* (from the Spanish *viajero*) - “traveller” or “voyager”. This is another term derived from the observation of agricultural practices in the cycling of the food crops in the system of crop rotation. For in the practice of cultivation, oca

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34 Willkaparupinixay chachaxa sasan sapxta...
Willkaparu is always a man, saying, we say...
always spends more time inside the ground than other crops after the sowing and before it sprouts. During its extra time in the earth, the oca is believed to be travelling as a voyager from place to place.

**Barley with a tail**

In the sequence of songs to the food products, the song to another root tuber, bitter oca (*isañu* in Aymara, *Tropaeolum tuberosum*), usually follows the song to oca. *Isañu* has the term of endearment of *jawq'a jawq'a* “because it cooks easily”. However, on this occasion, Don Domingo continued the sequence with the song to barley. The common and generic name of barley is *siwāra* (from Sp. *cebada*) or *yaranu* (Sp. *grano* meaning “grain”), but, as in the case of wheat, the lines of its song allude to several other names which also indicate something about its manner of reproduction.

One of the various names of barley mentioned in the song is *willkaparu*, and it is this particular variety which is said to be “man” always.\(^{35}\) *Willka* was said by Don Domingo, to refer to the manifest strength of barley as a grain. Apart from his suggestion, we don't have a direct gloss of this term from the region of Aymaya, and there seem to be several different possibilities of translation from the regional diccionaries of Aymara available to us. The modern dictionary of Büttner and Condori Cruz of the Aymara dialect from the region of Puno in Peru glosses *willka* as “the sun god” (Sp. *dios sol*) (1984: 251). Bertonio's 17th century vocabulary of Aymara from Chucuito in Peru, parses *willka* (*villca*) as “el sol como antiguamente dezian, y agora dizen inti” (1984/1612:386). But in Bertonio's vocabulary there is also a gloss for *willkaparu*. He translates *willcaparo* as “Mayz de que _uelen hazer chicha muy fuerte” (BERTONIO, 1612/1984: 386). The word *willkaparu* is probably composite, being constituted by two terms, *willka* and *paru*. *Paru* describes a distinct colour, a natural and un-dyed coffee brown, and Bertonio is probably alluding to a distinct variety of maize of this colour which makes strong cornbeer. Perhaps in ayllu Aymaya the same term describes a variety of barley

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\(^{35}\) One other possible literal translation of *willkaparu* is “to its sun”, if the composite word were composed of the root *willka*, followed by the third-person personal possessive suffix -*pa*, “his”, “her”, “its” or “their”, and the directional suffix -*ru*, “to” or “towards”, although this seems unlikely.
which has similar qualities? In Bertonio's vocabulary, there is another translation which is relevant here, of the term *villitha* (mod. *williña*) translated as “*Derramar arena, trigo y cosas semejantes que no son licores*” (BERTONIO 1612/1984: 386). Another possible meaning comes from the Quechua gloss of *willka* from the region around Cusco meaning “grandchild”. Nevertheless, despite the uncertainty of an exact translation, there are several clues to the semantic domain to which the term *willkaparu* refers: that the term denotes maleness and the strength of barley grains, that the term is related to the sun, it has to do with a variety of maize or cereal, coffee-brown in colour, which makes strong beer, and that the associated verb form describes the action of sprinkling small things, such as grains.

Once again, as in the case of wheat, the various names described above seems to indicate something about the manner of reproduction and regeneration of the barley-grain which contrasts with that of the root tubers such as potatoes and oca. Above all, the references to the sun seem to imply its importance for the growth of the barley-stem above the ground, and for the ripening of the barley seedhead and awn, and the additional references to the scattering of small grains may imply the importance of the wind in their dissemination. Another term of endearment for barley, not mentioned in the song, is *wich'ink"ani* - “with a tail”, which again suggests an aspect of its reproductive potential and power, the wind-blown awn which becomes staked to the ground. Once again we might expect a male cosmogony of father sun and spirit offspring.

However, the repertoire of epithets and their associated semantic domain in these songs from an oral culture does not follow such a pre-determined and fixed logic. In the altiplano of Qaqachaka, a variation of the theme of “having a tail” is reiterated in another term of endearment for barley, namely “the bearded one” (*sunk"ani*). The people of the altiplano, like those of the valleys, emphasise that bearded barley is *female*, and that her femaleness is indicated by her capacity for hairiness. The more bearded she is, the more female she is, and thus

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36 This would seem to contrast with the distinctly male “John Barleycorn” of English folklore. See the opening song at the beginning of this essay.
the more reproductive she is considered to be. Male barley, on the other hand, is that which appears shaven or bald (murum in Aymara).

This belief also has its basis in fact. For it is those bearded grains of barley which fall to the ground which have a greater capacity of reproducing, as their hairy awns stake them to the ground and prevent their drifting away in the wind or devouring by predators. In the case of the third variety of ch'isiwaya - “bunch of wind”, which describes the small-grained type, there is yet another allusion to the manner of its reproduction, namely the importance of wind. Wayu refers to the head of the barley and ch'isi refers to the wind itself. The force of the wind is necessary to loosen the grain of barley from its head (“load” or “burden”, q'ipi in Aymara), leaving behind a husked seed head (t"ulu) upon the stalk. When the dried out barleycorn loosens its head, when the husked seed head finally tumbles to the ground, it is called puya in Aymara.

In the case of wheat, the importance of the sun and wind in its manner of reproduction seemed to give rise to a play on the associated ideas of sun father and his son as the spirit offspring, el niñ o. In the case of barley, on the other hand, the association of her beardedness with her fertility predominate and she is also gendered as female.

Before the song to barley, there is a libation directed by the women present to the men:

\[
\begin{align*}
Jich"ax kawkitakis, & \quad \text{Now for which one?} \\
wich'inkani mamalatakit(i), & \quad \text{for the mamala with a tail?} \\
ukatakï willkaparupini, & \quad \text{For that one, for sun-brown then?} \\
ch'isiwayataki, sapxituy... & \quad \text{(or) for wind-bunch? they tell us.}
\end{align*}
\]

**Song to barley**

Then follows the song to the barleycorn:

\[
1 \quad \begin{align*}
\text{Mamalay, willkaparuy, ch'isiwaya,} & \quad \text{Mamala, sun-brown, wind-bunch,} \\
\text{Jumaxayaw wallinsay, ŋiñukita,} & \quad \text{Even in the valleys, you are just boy-child,} \\
\text{uk"amarakiway suninsa} & \quad \text{And even in the puna it is thus,} \\
\text{Niñarakita,} & \quad \text{You are girl-child too,}
\end{align*}
\]

37 There are similarities here to the alleged beliefs of the ancient Pythagoreans of the Old World, that beans embodied more ancestral substance than other food products, which they manifested as “breath”.
Plate 5: The Ripe and Bearded Barley

The herding of grains

The lines of the barley song do imply that barley is addressed less as mamala and more as a boy-child or girl-child, the offspring of its mother. It is barley which is considered to be the seed-grain par excellence, and it is called in Aymara simply “grain” (yaranu from Sp. grano). Although barley, like wheat, was a Spanish introduction to the Andes, its significance has been incorporated into Andean ritual practices and term of endearment, as well as indicated common metaphors and analogies between valleys and highlands, according to a common cosmological pattern.
Its granular quality is implicit in line 10, where the barley grains are described as entering “little by little”. The awkwardness of storing such uncontrollable seed-grains is a continual problem in the technologies of Andean farmers. Both the highland herders and the valley agriculturalists store their grains in woven sacks which must be of the finest quality and closest weave. In the valleys, the grains are also stored in cylindrical deposits called pirwas. Line 12 of the song refers to these grain deposits, and mentions their “three seams which undo” - *kimsa kusturanisay jumatakixa, jaratatasìway*. The food deposits are generally formed from branches of cane, strung together upright in file, and lashed together to form cylindrical bins which stand in the household patios. These grain dispensers (*tispinsa* from Sp. *dispensa*) are tied vertically with three seams made from dried and plaited llama hide, and the barley grains are stored inside. See Plate 6. But there is always a danger that the seams will undo and the grains will trickle out. For an additional and more magical security, a white stone called *piña* (an Aymarised play on words between *piña* in Spanish which means "pineapple", and *peña* in Spanish which means “rock”), is placed on top of the grains in the deposit. The *piña* stone is believed to guard the grains and to continually augment the stores, so that they will never run out. Moreover, the house food stores are a distinctly female domain. It is women who control the distribution and consumption of food for the household, and men are not allowed to enter the food stores without their permission (See also ARNOLD, 1988.)

Don Domingo's term of endearment for the three seams of the grain deposits is *saywa siñura*, which could be glossed as the “scarecrow lady”, or alternatively as the “lady who indicates quantity”. *Saywa* is a term for a boundary marker as well as a scarecrow in a field, and it can also be the marker of a food product. However, the word *saywa* also refers to the ropes with which the llama herders tie up their animals, inside their corrals, and so seems to suggest a common metaphor of enclosure transferred interchangeably between the two worlds of highland and valleys. The common cosmology of highland and valley is viewed differently, but using the same metaphors. Thus the people of the valleys view the barley grains in their dispensers like animals, lashed together with rope seams and guarded in their *pirwa* corrals. Even though the *pirwa* walls may undo in time, the barley grains have the capacity to stand firm like the *piña* stones which accompany them. As we might expect, in the
altiplano, too, *piña* stones are placed in the animal corrals, to augment the animal herds.

**PLATE 6 : THE GRAIN DEPOSITS WITH THEIR SEAMS OF WEALTH**

**The big-mouthed broad beans**

After the song to barley comes the song to broad beans. Since space does not allow an extended exegesis of the rest of the food crops, only a cursory description will follow. The term of endearment of broad beans is *jach'a lakani* - the “big-mouthed one”. Their song is a joking one:

**Song to the broad beans**

1. *Mamalay siñuray,*
   *Jumaxay ancha jach'a lak t"atstutarakitaway,*
   *mamalay,*
   *P"anqaristay,*
   *jumaxay mayku kunturitxay iñ'tat̨āta,*
   *Jumaxayay kullaksay jilsay,*
   *Jumaxayay sirxa aywiyirixa,*
   *mamala,*
   *ukaxay jumaxa rutiyanantway,*
   *Mamala lady,*
   *You have a mouth that is too big,*
   *mamalay,*
   *You make me happy,*
   *You are known as condor mayku,*
   *You are she who makes fart*
   *my sister as much as my brother,*
   *mamala,*
   *then you surround me,*
They say that when broad beans are toasted, they squeal, making the sound tiw tiw. Afterwards, when people eat the toasted beans at a feast, for example, the beans make your stomach ache, and afterwards make people fart a lot. The fart surrounds the person making them feel embarrassed and afraid. It is for this reason that the song says in line 10 - ukantiw jiwtyayista, mamala - “with this you make me feel afraid, mamala”.

**Peas - difficult to grasp**

There follows the song to another food mamala, to the peas, paired with broad beans in the libations as well as in the songs. Peas are called by their term of endearment - chukarillu - derived from the Spanish chucaro, “difficult to tame”:

**Song to the peas**

1 Mamalay chukar mamala, Mamala wild mamala,  
 Jumaxayay janìway katuñjämatati, To you, impossible to grasp,  
 Jìraqtaway mamala chukaru, You move aside, mamala, wild-one,  
 Jumaxayay uk”amaway kaysaru jiqtta, Thus you move to that side,  
5 Aksaru jiqtarakta, To this side you move too,  
 Jani kullakas katuñ atiraktmati Neither my sister can catch you,  
 Jani jilatas katuñ atiraktmati Nor my brother can catch you,  
 Piñakipiniway katusktməy Only the piña stone can catch you,  
 Saywa siñuraway katusktma, mamala The scarecrow lady can catch you, mamala  
10 Jumapiniw taykäta, You are always the mother,  
 ñiña...... the girl-child............

Once more, as in the former song to beans, the song to peas mentions the importance of the white piña stone, and of the saywa siñura, to grasp the unmanageable peas and to keep them in place, a power which is considered to be more than human. Another theme that emerges is that peas are not only addressed as “mother” (Aym. tayka) but also “girl-child”, ñiña.

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38 Awiyatura is derived from the archaic Spanish verb aviar, “to provide”.
**Lisasa - the playful one**

The song which follows is that to papaliza or lisasa, (*lisasa* or *ulluku* in Aymara and *ulluma* in Quechua, *Ullucus tuberosus*). Lisasa is another root tuber, like a smaller version of a potato only with a round shiny skin coloured with bright tinges of reds, yellows and oranges. Lisasa is perceived by the people of the valleys as a clumsy but playful *señora*, someone who is loved by all, in the towns as much as the countryside. Once again, as in the case of peas in the lines above, lisasa is called not only mamala, but also “girl-child”, *niña*:

**Song to papaliza**

1. *Mamalay siñuray jumaxa,*
   Mamala, you are the lady,
2. *List lisarakitaway,*
   You are the playful one,
3. *Añcha k'ullutaway,*
   You are so slow,
4. *Kunjamatsay jumaxay munatatay, siñuray,*
   Why are you so cherished, lady,
5. *Taqin munatatawa,*
   You are loved by everyone,
   *Janiway kampuki jum muntktmatixa,*
   Not only in the countryside do they love you,
6. *Taqi puylusay uk"amaraki*
   But also in all the towns,
7. *Pachamamasas munaki,*
   Even the Pachamama loves you,
8. *Jallparpayañ jallparpayañ sasa*
   Tasty, tasty, saying,
9. *Mamala, ñiña.......*
   Mamala, girl-child.......  

**The cry-baby watermelon**

The song to lisasa is followed by the song to watermelons. One of their terms of endearment is “cry-baby”, *jachawalla*, because the tendrils, like tears, sprout and creep out to all sides. Another term of endearment, not mentioned in the song, is “twelve tendrils” - *tunkapān mura*:

**Song to the watermelon**

1. *Mamala siñuray,*
   Mamalay, lady,
2. *Jumaxayay,*
   You then,
3. *Riyatay tirinsaray jaquri, mamalay,*
   (are) she who throws a plaited lasso, mamala,
4. *Jumaway qutu q'utu satata, mamala,*
   You are called a mound of goitres, mamala,
5. *Jumaxayay anch"ich"axay munata,*
   You are cherished right now,
   *Kimsa personatay mamala,*
   You are three persons, mamala,
   *Jumasti llusk'ak llusk'aki*
   (And) you are just slippery, slidey,
   *Maya kullakmasti,*
   and your other sister
   *Ch"unk"an ch"unk"an säta,*
   is called bearded one, bearded one,
In the lines of the song, various other metaphors for the watermelon are used. Line 3 suggests that the watermelon throws out its long plaited tendrils like lassos, while line 4 calls the melon fruits a “mound of goitres”. In the valleylands, a swollen thyroid gland as goitre is a common ailment, because of the shortage of iodine in the drinking water, and the round watermelons are compared to these swollen necks.

In the song, there is also the suggestion of a tripartite classification of the varieties of watermelon: the slippery one with a smooth skin, the bearded one with a hairy skin, and the white one. In Aymara taxonomy these three varieties are also classified as three persons, more specifically as “three sisters”. An element of tripartition system is also present in the naming of the three seams of the watermelon food deposits - the kimsa kusturani of line 12, which have their own reproductive powers. With these original ten songs, Don Domingo ended his sequence of songs to the food products.

**Thousands and thousands of quinua**

However, a complete cycle of songs should include twelve different food products cultivated in Aymaya. Sometimes different varieties of melon and gourd are added to the sequence. But we knew that Don Domingo had another food-song in his repertory, a song to a food product which is not cultivated much in the valleys, but more so in the higher altitudes such as Qaqachaka. This is the Andean semi-cereal, quinua (*jupa* in Aymara, *Chenopodium quinoa*). Our curiosity about this product led us to make a particular request that Don Domingo sing his song to quinua to us, even though he had not placed it in the original sequence of the songs. Nevertheless, it does always enter in this final position in his sequence of libations to the food products. Its term of endearment is “thousands and thousands” - *waranq waranqa*, after the tiny grains which it produces. Because of its excessive quantity, quinua is said to be that which conquers all, and that which no other food mamala can match:
Song to quinua

1 Waranq waranqay, mamalay
    Jumarakiyaw taqi atipiritaway mamala
    Janiw kawki mamalasay jumar alkansktmati
    Jumaxayay waranqat waranqatwayay
5 Tata Riyun kajparuy mantiri
    Ukatraki juma qarquri....

Thousands and thousands mamala,
You are she who conquers all, mamala,
No other mamala from any part can match you,
You are thousands and thousands,
Who enters the box-drum of Tata Rey
For this reason, too, you are she who brings fear..

Although quinua is addressed exclusively as a mamala in the song, Don Domingo actually classifies three different varieties; grey quinua (uqi) which he says is female, white quinua (janq'u) which he says is male, and the wild variety of qañawi (kañawi in Aymara, Chenopodium pallidicaule) which is red, which he considers to be the offspring of the other two.

However, it is specifically the femaleness of quinua in the song which appears to give rise to two references to memories of the Inka. The first memory lies in the ritual name of waranq waranqa, “thousands and thousands”, the measurement of the strength of quinua grains in sheer numbers. It is evident that the Inka administration measured the size of the ethnic chiefdoms under their control according to a decimal system, annotated on a system of knotted strings called kipu, and that a waranqa was a unit with one thousand tributaries. Waman Puma, in his seventeenth century “Letter to the King of Spain”, calls our attention to the Inka official who was in charge of actually counting the number of potential tributaries, in his drawing of the runakipu, the kipu measurer of people (runa in Quechua). He tells us how people were enumerated in two possible ways, either with the wool of a deer or with quinua seeds:

The Inka ordered (him) to count, enumerate, and adjust the Indians of this realm - with the wool of the deer, taruga - he matched the Indians with the wool - and he matched (them) with a grain called quinua - he counted the quinua and the Indians - his ability was very great, and he was better than with paper and ink (GUAMAN POMA DE AYALA 1936 §1615Ç: 361, in JULIEN, 1988: 267).

And could the emphasis on femaleness perhaps be an aspect of the memory of the Q”uyas as the patron of the food crops?

Another Inka-related belief which emerges in line 5 of the song is that the human belly is called the “drum” of the Inka King - Tata Riy Inka. Don Domingo told us:
“it is there that all the foods must enter (tagikun qarqusi). Quinua, by its force of numbers, is believed to be capable of killing anything, and of dismissing any maldición (the power of evil words). When they enter the belly, the grains of quinoa make all other things which are there afraid (as in line 6 of the song), and the force of niño, which they possess in greater capacity than any other grain, passes to the human who consumes them.”

The last line of the song, “you are she who brings fear”, following the same idea, is a sinister reminder that the Inka conqueror of the region made such drums from the stomach-skins of those members of the local ethnic groups who did not obey him. In this case, there is the same image of the provision, incorporation and cycling of substance and spirit, but in a perverted sense. Here the members of the local ethnic group seem to acknowledge their material and spiritual incorporation into the wider Inka empire. At one level they are provided with their necessary subsistence by their Inka overlord. But at another they become the victims of Inka conquest, either ready to be counted with quinua grains as willing tributaries, or liable to suffer defeat, bodily mutilation and the incorporation of their body parts into the Inka military and state apparatus. Their stomachs, which have been fed by the Inka's largesse, now become a perverted voice box whose spirit sound is pounded by drum sticks made from the forearms of the the same victim. The teeth which have eaten the food are hung to chatter on an Inka's necklace, and the top of their skull provides a drinking vessel for libations to the Inka state and the Inka deities, made with maize beer (see also CUMMINS, 1990).

5. The two last songs - coca and lye

Yungas mamala

With the song to quinua, the sequence of songs to the food products finally comes to an end. However, Don Domingo felt that his performance of the food songs was not complete without another pair of elements which are vital to Aymara agricultural ritual, most especially in the ritual of the sowing of the food seeds. This last pair was, namely, coca leaf and lye.

For Don Domingo, offerings of coca leaves stand in for all of the vegetation growing on the earth, for the greening of both human food crops and pastures for the animals. They must always be offered to the virgin earth in
rituals of sowing and again at harvest. A few leaves of coca are also traditionally chewed in a quid in the cheek with a kind of lye or cal (lejía in Spanish and llij'ta in Aymara), an alkali base which releases the active juices in the leaf. They say that is the “salt” (Aym. jayu) of the coca leaf. In the song, coca is called by its various ritual names, such as the “lady of the yungas” (yunkas siñura), after the semi-tropical valleys where coca is grown, and the “mamala of abundance” - inal mamala. The women sing how coca is always desired:

\[\text{ukapiniw munatax}a\]

### Song to coca

1. **Mamalay yunkas, siñuray inalay**, Mamala yungas, lady of abundance,
   **Jumapiniway kuns katjiri** You truly the finder of all,
   **Jumapiniway mamala** You truly mamala,
   **Jumapiniway quntanta, mamalay,** You who will always be seated, mamala,

5. **Taginsay jisk'ans jach'ansay** Of all things, big and small
   **Jumaxa munata Yunkas siñuray,** you are (most) cherished,
   **Taqi kastatxay jumaxa sinalapxistay** All things you reveal to us,
   **Pachamamansay munata** Even by the Pachamama you are loved
   **Uk"amaraki awiyaruruns munata, mamalay,** Thus even by the sender of provisions you are loved, too, mamala,

10. **Wasunsay munataraki** Even by the drinking cups you are loved, too,
    **Qantutansay munataraki** Even by \(qantuta\) you are loved as well,
    **Lap'iyansay munataraki** Even loved by all flowers, too
    **Chasqiñansay munataraki** Even by \(chasqiña\) you are loved, as well,
    **Chuqi rutiyu, quri rutiyu.....** Rodeo of white gold, of yellow gold......

In the song, as in the case of the food products, coca is addressed as señora and mamala, and with the humanising second person personal pronoun - juma. Line 2 mentions the capacity of coca to “find” things, an allusion to the practice of divination used by wise ones, those with the ability to “read” the coca leaves in order to recover lost objects and to discover the culprit who robbed them. Line 9 mentions that coca is desired by the awiyatura - uk"amaraki awiyaruruns munata . Awiyatura refers to those specific hills which are believed to provide the community of Don Domingo by sending each food product with its breath.  

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39 Rutiyu is a borrowing from the Spanish rodeo, meaning “corral”.

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series of libations, because people always chew coca when they drink and record the terms of endearment of their food products.

Another theme which emerges in lines 12 to 14 of the song is the relationship between coca and luck (surti from Sp. suerte). Here good luck is represented by various types of flower, with their generic name of “leaves” (Aym. lap'iya), and the specific variety names of chasqiña and qantuta. The last line of the song, line 14, mentions a form of misa (a play on words between the Spanish forms of misa , “a mass” and mesa, “a table”) a particular altar layout used by wise-ones in order to bring luck to an individual or community. These always contain leaves of coca, and are called in ritual language “rodeo of white gold, rodeo of yellow gold” - chuqi rutiyu, quri rutiyu

These allusions to white gold and yellow gold once again remind us of the Inka deities, the moon and the sun, to which the first leaves of coca are offered. They say that it was the mother of the heavens, the Virgin Mariya, who was the originator of coca leaves from the time when she was offered coca to chew to assuage her loss, after the death of her son. Nothing else would appease her.

Coca leaf also plays an important role not only in agricultural rituals but also in the collective work tasks of ayni, at sowing and harvest, and in the series of libations which follow such tasks. After sowing, three leaves of coca are buried in the centre of the field with q'uwa, an aromatic herb. They request the Pachamama to chew the coca, so that she may produce many offspring:

\[
\text{Pachamama, akull'tasmay,}
\text{sum waw uywät(a).}
\]
Earth mother, please chew this, and take care of the baby well.

The green leaves of coca are compared to the desired green covering of the earth with the new food crops. But by a common metaphorical extension, they are compared to the new coats of wool which the animals will bear in the new season, and to the tender red meat which the animals will provide once they have eaten the new green pastures. Participants in the collective tasks of sowing and harvest are given coca, food and alcohol in exchange for their labour, and after eating their share of the banquet provided they make libations and chew coca recording the

\[\text{40 Jach'a tayk sapxi tunqxa.}
\text{Great mother they call maize.} \]
terms of endearment for the food crops (chayi) and the domesticated animals (uywa). They also record the meat which they have eaten in the feast.

On these occasions the distribution of coca leaf is accompanied by gifts of lye. “But it isn't just given like that”, says Don Domingo:

“We have to pass it on kissing it as we do so. People request it saying “throw me some!” and then we toss it but kiss it first. If we don't do this, then thunderbolts may seize it, he who growls q'aw q'aw, may grab it, so for this reason we pass it on kissing it first.”

**Song to lye**

1 *Inal mamalanay misk'irasiñay*  
   Of the mamala of abundance  
   you are her sweetening,

2 *Arimuñay arimuñay mamala*  
   So cherished mamala

3 *Jumasay taqi kastarakitaway*  
   You too are of various classes,

4 *Jumampiniway*  
   With you always,

5 *Qullusay Pachamamas musq'arasi*  
   the hills and the Pachamama are sweetened,

   *Jumawayay panti q'urawampis irpxatirïta...* You who brings near the red sling.....

In the last line of the song to lye, there is another reference to the belief that lye attracts thunderbolts if people don't kiss it before passing it on. Here thunderbolts are referred to by their ritual name of “the red sling” - *panti q'urawa*. The first lines of the song emphasise the sweetness of lye, not only as a sweetener to accompany the chewing of coca leaf, but also as the characteristic sweetener in the offerings made to the mountains and to the Pachamama. And with the song to lye closes the sequence of songs to the food products in ayllu Aymaya.

6. Conclusions

**A “metalanguage” of the food-songs**

In this concluding section, we shall begin to suggest some of the salient characteristics of a “metalanguage” of the food songs, as they have emerged through their performance and the discourse about them by their performer, and locate it within the wider context of studies of Andean food and culture. Above all, what seems to emerge through the ritual language of the food songs, as described by their performer, although it is not precisely named here, is an Andean idea of a shared relationship of both substance and spirit between
species, an attitude and ethics which Andeans have towards their food plants, their animals and their gods. We would suggest that this attitude appears to be communicated through the oral tradition of the women's food-songs by a series of precise analogies, through which the different realms of human, animal and plant life are interconnected through similar relationships, most specifically by relationships of similar kinship and similar descent.

One initial question raised by our preliminary study of these analogies is whether we should continue to call this sense of interrelationship between species a “totemic” one, even one of “food for thought”. Perhaps we should call them instead an aspect of “interspecies communication”? - a term still radical to the social sciences, even though anthropologists have written about it (for example GUSS, 1985). The nature of its language is still more common among a different variety of specialists, among, for example, agriculturalists and ecologists in their studies of native farming systems (BERRY, 1979; NABHAN, 1989). It is still comparatively rare in anthropological accounts, apart from Harrison's recent integration of the agricultural studies of Stephen Brush into her poetics of potato cultivation (HARRISON, 1989).

Other important facets of this Andean attitude and ethics, pervasive in the songs, are evident not only in the immediately associated tasks of agricultural production, but also in other more contingent tasks, such as weaving which was briefly mentioned in the song to oca, and house-building, which we have described elsewhere (ARNOLD, n.d.2). Our problem of how to address the nature of such interrelationships between species is also relevant to the question of how to address interrelationships between such seemingly diverse tasks. When the matter of relationships between such different domains of activity has been addressed recently, such as in the work of Barbara Tedlock (1985), it has usually been discussed under the linguistic rubric of “intertextuality”, after the work of Kristeva (1980), in an emerging language of study which gives precedence to “interrelationships” rather than “codes”, to dialogue rather than monologue, and to the openness rather than closedness of text, to texts as the cultural bearers of many texts, to texts as “heteroglossia” (BAKHTIN, 1981).

We face the additional caveat, however, that here we are dealing not just with performance as text, but rather with performance as action. Our dialogue with Don Domingo took place during the course of a performance of song, and
it necessarily raises the spectre of the physical act of singing. The song texts cannot easily be prised from their contexts, nor from the underlying essences which imbue power to the melodies of the songs and their lyrics. It is too easy in the attention to word and meaning in a written text to miss such important aspects of oral performance as the magical power of word (MALINOWSKI, 1935; TAMBIAH, 1968) and the animating character of breath (BUTT COLSON, 1956; GUSS, 1986:423). Don Domingo's exegesis of his songs reveals not only important aspects of an Andean ethics, but also of an Andean metaphysics, evident in each different activity of singing, cultivating and weaving, and in their common language of analogies and interrelationships. Since the recycling of ancestral substance in its various forms is such a primary component of the food songs and his discourse about them, we have suggested that the food songs should be approached as much as an aspect of “food for the soul” as “food for thought”.

The power of song

The study of this song cycle from Aymaya as an aspect of “food for the soul” has indicated various themes which must be studied further in the future. First of all, it has shown that the power of song, according to Aymara beliefs, and implicit in Don Domingo's own exegesis of them, is twofold. As women sing, they are believed to water and to irrigate the ground, preparing it for the sowing of the new food seeds. And as they sing the songs to the food seeds, they are believed to be participating in the act of sowing itself. The act of singing the songs to the food seeds, and the act of sowing the new seeds in the earth are not differentiated linguistically in Aymara language. They are what may be described as an “intertext” of each other.

We are not, however, describing a passive and theoretical stance, nor a rare and elitist activity. We have suggested that it is the efficacious nature of women's singing that seems to lie behind the intimate language of the songs and the accompanying libations. While attention has been given to the specialist power of wise-ones (yatiris), to effect a communication between human and non-human entities (see, for example, HUANCA, 1989), in the domain of activity of the food-songs these two realms, of human and non-human, are mediated by women's voices. Here, it is not a specialist ritual task, for all women in the ayllu have the power to sing, and they do as they carry out such
daily chores as herding and planting. Moreover, it is the general intimacy of this personal communication between the human mamalas of the ayllu, and their spirit counterparts, the mamalas of the food products, that is believed to result in the success of the future harvest of the crops.

We have suggested that it is specifically the drunken nature of song, which is believed to effect this result. According to Aymara metaphysics, song is believed to be a means of releasing the flow of spirit as breath, which rises from belly to throat to mouth, and which in turn fertilises the new food seeds which fall onto the earth in the words of their song verses. But it is also the additional stimulating power of the alcohol, imbibed by the drunken women, which is essential to release the power of song, and to generate its verses of music from an underground realm, one where previous seed grains, soaked and transformed into beer, provides the material substances which must mix - in the meeting of the past dry food seeds and the watery voices of the present.

If we tried to interpret the song texts in a literal sense, we might conclude that breath and word, water and seed, are intertexts of one another, metaphors of speech which structure layers of analogical discourse. However, it is clear that the power of song, according to Aymara beliefs, implies far more than a series of metaphorical tropes. The power of song provides not only relational intertexts between activities, but is also the basis of underlying essences, in a relationship between language and technology which makes possible the animation and engendering of new life. It is only through the activity of singing to the food crops, that the gendered materials of ancestral substance, the watery-breath and word-seeds, mix, and in their magical mixing the earth and the new food seeds are made fertile. Don Domingo's exegesis about the song texts has shown the complexity of the ways in which these ancestral substances are believed to be gendered, and the different contexts in which reproduction and regeneration of ancestral substance takes place. Fig. 5 is just a crude rendering of some of the possibilities mentioned.
FIG. 5 THE GENDERING OF ANCESTRAL SUBSTANCES

The food mothers and their various offspring

A second major theme to have emerged in this study is that it is not only in the nature of drunken song itself, but also in the content, ordering and organisation of the songs, that Aymara beliefs about the symbolism of the food crops emerge. We have used the opportunity of analysing Don Domingo's songs here to set out a broader comparative perspective about these beliefs from the point of view, not only of the agriculturalists of his own valley of Aymaya, but also of the highland herders of ayllu Qaqachaka. When we compared the views about the food crops in both ecological zones, we found a comparative world view which shared the same symbolic and cosmological universe, but which organised the same elements in different ways. Within this common cosmological pattern, there are local variations. Not only are there different “mother” crops in the two zones, but there are also different “offspring”. Furthermore, it is the birth order of the different offspring which appears to be reflected in the order of products in the song cycle and libation sequences of each zone.

In the valleys of Aymaya, as the opening song reveals, it is maize which takes pride of place, not only in the cultivation process but also in the beliefs about the food products, in their ontology and cosmogony, as well as in the order of the libations and the order of the songs. In the valleys, too, it is maize which is considered to be the great mother of the products. And it is the she-maize who is said to give birth to the rest of the food products, as if they were her offspring. In highland Qaqachaka, on the other hand, it is potatoes which are

---

41 Akan ch'uqipi' tayka sataxaraki
   And here potatoes are called mother.
considered to be the mother,\textsuperscript{42} and the mother of all the food products.\textsuperscript{43} It is to potatoes that the libation sequence opens in Qaqachaka, and the song cycles there once opened with the song to potatoes.

Qaqas explain that there is this difference in each ecological zone, for each zone necessarily gives pride of place to its principal crop.\textsuperscript{44} However, another reason for the exact ordering of the food products, not only in the songs, but also in the libations of each zone, seems to be related to the precise practices of cultivation. In the valleys, for example, it is maize rather than potatoes which opens the cycle of production in the system of rotation of the food crops in the larger and communal fields (\textit{aynuqa}). In the agricultural plots of the valleys, it is maize which is planted in the first year of cultivation, followed by potatoes in the second and perhaps the third years of cultivation, and finally by wheat or barley in the final year. In the altiplano zone of Qaqachaka, by contrast, potatoes open the cycle of cultivation, followed by other Andean root crops such as oca or papaliza in the second year, and then by a grain such as wheat or barley in the final year. This occurs both in the small private fields under continuous cultivation and also in the larger communal fields where a system of sectoral fallow demands long periods of rest between cultivation. See Fig. 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop rotation cycles in</th>
<th>Qaqachaka valleys (3,000m)</th>
<th>Qaqachaka altiplano (3,800m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st year</td>
<td>maize</td>
<td>potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd year</td>
<td>potatoes</td>
<td>oca or papaliza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd year</td>
<td>(potatoes)</td>
<td>wheat or barley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4th year)</td>
<td>wheat or barley</td>
<td>(begin fallow period in large fields or repeat potatoes in small fields)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{FIG. 6 CROP ROTATION CYCLES IN HIGHLAND AND VALLEY}

It is, more precisely, this “birth” order of the crop rotation cycle, which seems to influence the organisation, ordering and ontology of the song cycle. In

\textsuperscript{42} \textit{Bay llallaw mamala mamalanaka.}  
Oh mother of all the food products, mamala.

\textsuperscript{43} The altitude of ayllu Qaqachaka ranges from over 5,000m down to 3,600m, whereas the altitude of Don Domingo’s community is about 3,300m.

\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Chayitak payat payat unt’añaw}  
For the foodstuffs, we drink pair by pair.
the valleys, they believe that maize is the “mother” (mamala) of the crops, that potato is her “girl-child” (imill wawa), and that wheat is her “boy-child” (yuqall wawa), just like the order of the crops in the fields. See Fig. 7. In an analogical way, it is to maize that the cycle of songs opens, followed by the song to potatoes and then the song to wheat. This contrasts with the beliefs of the altiplano. In highland Qaqachaka we found that potatoes are considered to be the “mother” of all the food products, whereas papaliza, another root tuber, is considered to be her “girl-child”, and oca, another root tuber, is considered to be her “boy-child”. In certain contexts, wheat is called “boy-child” there, too. This cosmogony also seems to follow closely the order of the crops in the planted fields:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cosmogony</th>
<th>valleys</th>
<th>altiplano</th>
<th>Cultivation cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
<td>maize</td>
<td>potatoes</td>
<td>1st year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girl-child</td>
<td>potatoes</td>
<td>papaliza</td>
<td>2nd year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boy-child</td>
<td>wheat</td>
<td>oca or wheat</td>
<td>3rd year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIG. 7 THE FOOD CROP COSMOGONIES**

Previous studies have examined this differing perspective on the same cosmology from the point of view of herders and agriculturalists in other regions (see for example TOMOEDA, 1985). However, here we seem to be dealing not only with differing ways of perceiving a common cosmology, but also with different ways of organising a common cosmogony. We shall have to return once again to our opening theme, to the problem of defining these relationships as ones of totemism or an intercommunication between species, to establish more clearly the pattern of rules and variations in these cosmological patterns. At the present time, though, we have established that according to this common cosmological pattern, the food products are categorised by relationships of symbolic kinship, even though different food products enter the specific categories in both zones. Thus, some pairs of food products are viewed as “mother” and “daughter” (maize and potatoes in Aymaya, but potatoes and papaliza in Qaqachaka), others as “mother” and “son” (maize and wheat in Aymaya, but potatoes and wheat in Qaqachaka), and yet others as mamala and mamala, as an all-female pair who are enamoured of each other (maize and potatoes, and salt and maize in both zones).

**Rule and variation**
Other aspects of this distinction between rules and variations upon those rules are also evident in a number of associated domains. This suggests that perhaps the 'looseness' of fit between them might be one characteristic feature of a predominantly oral culture. One of the principal difficulties in analysing such oral traditions, where the rules which govern behaviour, and the limits of individual variation upon these basic rules, are obscure, is in the grouping of the food products into common classification systems.

For example, one of the primary rules in making libations to the food products, in both ecological zones, seems to be that they must be made in pairs. This seems to follow the supposed pan-Andean logic of complementary opposition, that everything has its essential other half. Aymaras say that to make libations in pairs is lucky (surti) - surtt'añani, they say, “let's make luck” - whereas to make single libations (ch'ulla) is to address the dead, and is therefore unlucky. In the making of these libations, then, the rule is that the food products are always organised as pairs which must accompany each other.

However, the degree of individual variation within this rule seems to be highly elaborated. In Don Domingo's case, he gives not only ritual but also mundane reasons for these pairings, when he suggests that the pairing is necessary in the composition of everyday foods - such as those hot broths when maize always accompanies potatoes, and where broad beans always accompany peas. In his own ordering of the food songs, and in his sequence of libations, Don Domingo inevitably follows a certain order which approximates the one given here, but we have noted that he tends to vary the order towards the end of the sequence rather than the first few products which open the cycle. In Qaqachaka, too, not only have we noticed that there are quite different orders to these pairings from the examples in Aymaya valleys, but that each person varies his or her own sequence of pairings in each separate performance. To date, we have only elicited such common rules as that the sequence must start with products grown in Qaqachaka and then continue with those products grown in the valleys. Two different sequences, set out below in Fig. 8 are typical examples of the contrast between Aymaya and Qaqachaka food pairs.

Food pairs in Aymaya valleys

Food pairs in highland Qaqachaka

45 In Don Domingo's original cycle of songs there was a sequence of nine songs in all.
after Don Domingo J. after Doña Lucia Q.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Traditional Cycle of Crop Rotation in Aymaya</th>
<th>Cycle of Songs in Aymaya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maize and potatoes</td>
<td>maize opened the cycle of crop rotation in the larger fields, followed by potatoes in the second year and then by wheat or barley, in a cycle of three years of production, followed by six years of fallow before the three crops were planted again. This makes an overall cycle of nine years, before the first crop returns to its place of origin once again in the tenth year. By an analogous extension, the song to maize opens the cycle of songs, followed by the songs to potatoes and wheat. We might even describe this organisational feature as a common syncopation between the rhythm of cultivation of the primary food crops in the fields, and the order of appearance of the crops in the food songs.</td>
<td>potatoes as sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wheat and oca</td>
<td></td>
<td>maize as sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isañu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broad beans and peas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lisasa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>watermelons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(other squashes and gourds)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quinua (an afterthought?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coca and lye</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quinua (an afterthought?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Syncopation**

Another question which must be raised in the future is whether the sequences of the crops in the food songs really are random, emerging according to individual inspiration during each performance, or whether a more detailed analysis might reveal which elements or processes pattern the sequence of food songs. A multi-layered intertextuality between the technologies of songmaking, agriculture and weaving are a prominent feature of Don Domingo's exegesis about the food songs, and so it would not be surprising for organisational features from one domain of activity to structure others.

We have suggested here that one patterning feature for the opening elements of the sequence of food crops in the songs seems to be the order of cultivation in the crop rotation cycle in the larger fields. Traditionally, in the valleys of Aymaya, maize opened the cycle of crop rotation in the larger fields, followed by potatoes in the second year and then by wheat or barley, in a cycle of three years of production, followed by six years of fallow before the three crops were planted again. This makes an overall cycle of nine years, before the first crop returns to its place of origin once again in the tenth year. By an analogous extension, the song to maize opens the cycle of songs, followed by the songs to potatoes and wheat. We might even describe this organisational feature as a common syncopation between the rhythm of cultivation of the primary food crops in the fields, and the order of appearance of the crops in the food songs. See Fig. 10.
These possible cultural and ecological reasons for the ordering of the song cycle may suggest further clues to an understanding of the organisation of an “art of memory” in oral cultures such as still exists among the older people in Aymara valleys. What seems most probable, from our analysis here, is that the sequencing is not arbitrary, but that there are various different levels of internal ordering which function simultaneously. For example, at the opening of the song cycle, maize is always followed by potatoes. This occurs not only in the crop rotation cycle in the fields, but in the ordering of relationships of symbolic kinship in the crop cosmogonies. Maize and potatoes are not only the principal pair of mamalas, and also the first pair of symbolic kin as mother and daughter. They also are the opening pair of a tripartite group of symbolic kin as mother, daughter and son - maize, potatoes and wheat. The overall ordering of the songs is thus structured according to these various layers of internal metaphors and analogies, which are remembered by the performers on each occasion they are rendered. We might say here that the order of the food crops in the songs provides a large-scale syncopation, while the relationships of symbolic kinship between the food crops provide a rapid rhythm of mental possibilities between them. See, Fig. 11.

maize : potatoes :: wheat

:: mamala: mamala

:: (grand)mother : daughter

:: mother : daughter (: son )

FIG. 11 RHYTHM AND SYNCOPATION IN CROP SEQUENCE
Reproductive analogies

At another level of analysis altogether, there is the question of “causes” - why certain systems of classification of the food products should have been selected rather than others. We have suggested here that these classification systems are not made randomly. Moreover, it seems that clues to an Aymara taxonomy of the food products seem to lie not only in the processes and practices of agricultural production, but also in the specific processes of crop reproduction. We have tried to show how, embedded in the verses of the songs, are important distinctions in the reproductive symbolism of the food crops. One is the difference between those crops which crop below the ground, in the cold, and under the influence of the moon, as in the case of the root tubers. Another is the case of those food crops which grow above the earth and depend more on the light and warmth of the sun, as in the case of the grains. With root tubers, there is a system of non-sexual reproduction by cloning which is represented analogically as a relation of symbolic kinship between mother and daughter, whereby a mother gives birth to her daughters. And it is in this underground realm where the concept of wirjina, the virgins, has more importance, and where the agricultural rituals stress more the importance of fertilising rains as women's blood (see also ARNOLD, 1988 and n.d.1). With the grains, there is a system of sexual reproduction, aided by the force of the wind, which is represented analogically as a relation of symbolic kinship between a father and his son. And here, the agricultural rituals stress the importance of breath (samiri), and the force of niño as spirit.

We have only just begun to understand the level of complexity of the Andean metaphysics which seems to organise these beliefs about the food products. Even so, it does seem too simplistic at this stage to just set up another set of binary oppositions, borrowed from a structuralist model, as the Andean principle of organisation: of cold versus warmth, moon versus sun, below versus above, female versus male, blood versus breath and so on, as Ossio has tried to do, despite the many insights in his paper (OSSIO, 1988). In fact, it is essential to compare this song cycle from Aymaya valleys with others, from other parts of the warm valley lands, as well as those from the altiplano. Only by a broader comparative analysis may we check our results so far and begin to know what questions to ask in the future.
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