

## Premodern Intellectual Tradition.

### Influence to Be Taken in The Current Peruvian Philosophy

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#### 1. Introduction

Peruvian or Andean philosophy has been, up until the sixties, an echo of foreign philosophical traditions, as stated by Mariátegui (*Ob. Cit.*, p. 25), or, as Enrique Dussel claims, up until today at the beginning of the twenty first century. In this sense, Latin American philosophers have been reduced to commentators or broadcasters of foreign ideas (2022): if they do not philosophize from Latin America, Abya Yala or The Andes, they are merely colonized minds with ideas created to solve far-off problems. However, in the last 50 years Latin America and Peru have had intellectuals who have opened and signaled a path to philosophical reflection, such as: Enrique Dussel, David Sobrevilla. As Francisco Miró Quesada and Mario Bunge envision, philosophy must be capable of presenting solutions to our practical and theoretical problems.

Consequently, we will give information regarding the conception of the premodern Andean world.

#### 2. Data of the Peruvian Andean Reality

Peru is not a nation, but a State, a State formed by more than ninety different ethnicities, each with a different language, history, religion, and geographical space. The main languages of the Peruvian mountain ranges, or Sierra, are Aimara and Quechua, the latter having more than half a dozen of variants —the main one being Quechua Inca, which was the logos employed by the Incas that took the Andes to its maximum cultural and social development. Among other Quechua variants are the Quechua from *wamanka* (Ayacucho), Quechua *chanka* (Apurimac), Quechua *wanka* (from the central Sierra of Peru), and Quechua from the Ancash department which constitute more than six variants, etcetera.

The other speakers of native languages are found in the Peruvian Amazon. The Quechua Inca speakers are more numerous, followed by the Aimara and the *Wamanka*, *Chanka*, *Wanka*, and the Huánuco and Ancash variants. The Andes reached its highest development with Incan rulers, which were great statisticians and whose construction work has been greatly admired in places such as *Machupikchui*, *Saqsaywaman*, *P'isaq*, *Choqek'iraw*, *Ollantaytambo*, *Chincheros*, *Wilkaswaman*. A strong social and political organization can be perceived behind these architectural creations, as well as the practical application of advanced mathematics, even though the theoretical component remains inaccessible in present-day as no documents or treaties have been obtained.

At the Inca State, people were organized by families of ten, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, etc. The State was cast by four regions, reason why it was known as the *Tawantinsuyo* (meaning four regions). The Inca was considered as The Sun's son, it is speculated that their form of government can be compared with the Asian Mode of Production (Chesnaux, 1975). Some specialists have mentioned a different mode of production, titled as *Andean Mode of Production* (Espinoza, 1981), the main characteristic being that there was no knowledge of slavery, and that the Incan ruler was considered as a fatherly figure, benefactor of the poor and advocate of the common good.

Furthermore, it is imperative to clarify that in the Inca State there was no notion of poor, such as is commonly understood today, this meaning, "poor", as deprived of estate or wealth. Incan poverty entails having no family, being an orphan, deprived of friends, or being a parvenue.

### 3. Cultural elements common to the people of the *Tawantinsuyo*

The people of *Tawantinsuyo* have in common:

1. The worship of Pachamama (mother nature). As per our knowledge, this goddess had no physical or visual representation, it could be stated that it was an ideal goddess residing on earth. We think that it is the labor of men that transformed her into "mother", this, in regard that undomesticated land was not generous. Additionally, *pacha* in Quechua Inca stands for space, time, nature, and world.
2. The worship to the Sun (*Tayta Inti*) Father Sun. Also named as "*p'unchaw*" or "*p'unchay*", since it was the bringer of light and water for the rains, as well as bearer of heat for the crop's maturation. This god had a great temple at Cusco; the *Qorikancha* (yard of gold) was an Incan pantheon of the Andean gods. Other gods from defeated cultures were taken there, while maintaining their corresponding worship. The Sun was represented by a circular effigy made of gold, embedded in a wall inside the temple, the same that was forcefully taken and fractured with a chisel to be divided between the conquerors.
3. Similarly, The Moon (*mama Killa*) and the stars, among them the planet Venus (*Qoyllur*), received worship in its respective temple. The stars were considered as daughters of the Sun and Moon.

4. Above the minor gods was the God *Pachakamaq*, this means, the God creator of space, time, nature, and the world. Its main temple (templo mayor) can be found on the Lurín district in the Lima province.
  
5. Socially, people were divided in *ayllus* and *suyus*. In the Quechua Inca, there is no term for city, however there is a concept named *llaqta*, similar to the Latin terms “*civis y civitas*” (Blanquez Fraile, 1954, p. 234). This refers to the population that inhabits a territory, same as “*urbs*”, term which also refers to the population (Ibídem, p. 1240). The conquerors were the ones that founded the cities, with a designated space named “plaza de armas” (main square), where the major buildings were found, including those related to religion (such as the cathedral or catholic temple and the presbytery), and public institutions, like the mayor's office, governor's office, and the judicial palace. Immediately after, people settled at the surroundings, similar to roman cities, or “solars”, according to the Spanish, where they settled in order of importance, where the native population remained last.
  
6. The premodern Indigenous families, before the Spanish invasion, lived far away from others, each one in the space of their own crop field or *chakra*. This was not appreciated by the priests, nor the Spanish conquerors, mostly because the former had to invest plenty of time to catechize the native people, since they had to travel with difficulty and at night. For convenience, they thought it would be useful to group the native families into populated city centers, particularly, to have in hand immediate labor for the mines and the new estates or “Haciendas”. The Indigenous people who resisted the relocation to those new cities were forcibly removed. The priests had orders from the Spanish monarchy and the Pope to catechize the natives, at first, they opted to teach them Latin to avoid the multilingual barrier within the population. However, the results were far from those expected, so they started teaching in Spanish. Nonetheless, the experiment failed yet again, hence, the ecclesiastical authorities forced those studying to be ordained to learn in-depth Quechua Inca or the general tongue of Peru, as to indoctrinate and confess the natives. Before the deacons were ordained, they were thoroughly and personally investigated by the bishops. Despite this, it is important to disclose that at the beginning of the indoctrination process, the clergy visited the families at their *chakras* and resided with them. Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, in his work *La Nueva Crónica de Buen Gobierno*, unveils that the priests visited the huts where the daughters of the Indigenous slept alone, at night and with the pretense of catechizing them, they stared at their privates, or, as it is said in Spanish, “*les miraban sus vergüenzas*”. (Guamán Poma de Ayala, 1966. p. 100)

7. Other elements. In the Premodern Andes money was unconventional. Commerce was made through barter or exchange (*chalay o rantiy*) and *qhatuy*, which means to offer in exchange. Regarding this, it is important to note that the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega was mistaken when affirming the existence of prostitution in the Tawantinsuyo. In reality, this practice emerged in The Andes with the arrival of the Spanish invaders and the appearance of money; it was not an Indigenous or Andean practice. Even if we were to assume that it existed, ¿how would the services be paid? With a cargo of potatoes or a load of maize. At the end of the service, ¿who would carry the load of potatoes or maize, being that money was nonexistent? In time of the Incas, as well as the semitic culture, it was normal for all men and women to marry, moreover, the care provided by the State was organized in families (*ayllu*), husband, wife, and children, where families were grouped by the tens, hundreds, or thousands.
  
8. Working ways. Firstly, work was considered as a festive activity; Andeans had no idea of the Edenic origin, much less of the concepts of sin and salvation. The Quechua term meaning lack or absence, took a religious shift to mean “sin”. Unquestionably, the practice of repentance and confessions of sins, as well as the communion, was unheard-of.
 

Among the more common modes of work were:

  - a. *Ayni*: work accomplished with the help of other people, by solidarity or reciprocity. It entails that the one who received help must assist the helper in an equivalent way.
  - b. *Mink'a*: work done through invitation, where the guest is not required to reinstate or reciprocate the activity.
  - c. *Wayka*: work done by several people in favor of widows, orphans, or regarding activities that pertain or affect the whole village and must be solved urgently. Examples of this are the restoration of irrigation water pipes, bridges, or paths, etc.
  - d. *Waki*: where owners who are incapable of cultivating their land, seek a young person and head of family, to cultivate and tend the land. Commonly, the essential elements, such as seeds, were provided by the owner. When reaping the harvest, “in situ”, the goods were distributed in equal parts between the worker and the owner of the land.
  
9. The *hamawt'as*. The Quechua term *hamawt'a* means teacher; it is likely that they exercised their magisterium in the “*yachaywasi*”: houses of knowledge or colleges. *Hamawt'as* were also known as the wise, we believe that they were instructors on the way of life, not focused on philosophical or theoretical reflection. We are unable to know the level Quechua people reached in the field of knowledge and understanding, however, there are references to writing, like *kipu*, a probable glyph system, and *qelqa*, a knotted string system, which have not been fully decoded at present day. Gary Urton in *Quipus de Pachacamac (kipus de Pachakamaq)*, presents an interesting

interpretation of the countable and numeric content, however, the relations between the facts and the data are unknown. Meaning that the *numerical* part has been solved, but not the *alfa* one: entailing that within such children, alphanumeric information was contained (Urton, 2014, p. 24-38). Similar to Pedro Cieza de León, who recounts his experience living in Jauja where *kipukamayoc*, an Incan accountant or scribe, decodes a *kipu* to satisfy the aforementioned chronicler's curiosity (Cieza de León, 1977, pág. 46-47).

The British engineer (Burns Glynn, 1990), deciphered the symbols weaved into the sashes of the Inca around the nineties, in the past century, all of them illustrated in the “*Nueva Crónica de Buen Gobierno*” by Felipe Huamán Poma de Ayala. However, it must be highlighted that this discovery functions only for the Quechua *wamanguino*, and not for the Quechua Inca, which has more consonants and vocals than the *wamanguino*. We consider that writing and its democratization played a crucial role in the invention and development of philosophy, mainly because philosophy is a critical and theoretical knowledge. In general, we consider that in theocratic cultures, such as the Inca, critical reflection could not be established, nor the questioning of the mandates, practices and habits, or religion, among other cultural elements. In this form of government, the king's word, or Incan, were irrefutable.

Nonetheless, we can sustain that the Inca arrived at pre-philosophical knowledge when dealing with the concepts and names of *Wiraqocha* or *Pachakamaq*, as well as in the quest for justice and pursuit of the common good. We believe that they were far from reflecting about philosophical categories as they did not reach philosophy.

#### 4. Did philosophy exist in the Premodern Andes?

Regarding this question, some Peruvian philosophers uphold the existence of a premodern philosophy while others deny it. However, there are other intellectuals and reflection devotees that do not discuss the Incan logos, but advocate that there was an Incan philosophy before the arrival of the Spanish.

- Among the philosophers that deny the existence of a premodern Incan philosophy or *tawantinsuyana*, are Augusto Salazar Bondy, David Sobrevilla Alcázar, Mario Mejía Huamán.
- Among the philosophers that defend the existence of philosophy in The Andes, we can mention María Luisa Rivara de Tuesta, Antero Peralta Vásquez, Víctor Mazzi Huaycucho, Zenón de Paz.
- A third group of Latin American philosophers that indirectly support the existence of modern or current Latin American reflection, but do not endorse specifically premodern philosophy, are Enrique Dussel, Raúl Fornet Betancourt, Juan Adolfo Vásquez, Rodolfo Kusch, Juan Scannone.

As is general knowledge, there are also Peruvian and Latin American philosophers that do not affirm or deny the existence of premodern philosophy in The Andes, for they only consider philosophy that which was cultivated in classical Greek culture or in modern France, England, Spain, or United States.

For example, Augusto Salazar Bondy asserts that our continent has no proper philosophy, maintaining that reflection is made with theoretical frameworks previously made and shaped by Western and European thought, only importing ideological currents, schools, and systems already defined. Furthermore, he states that indigenous, or popular, thought was not incorporated in the process of Latin American philosophy (*Salazar Bondy, ¿Existe una filosofía de nuestra América?, 1968. p. 39*).

Moreover, the expression of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel who, in his Lectures on the History of Philosophy, states that philosophy is its own time apprehended in thoughts a great link in the chain of evolution, and that it only gives satisfaction to the interests of its own time (*Hegel, 1945, p. 48*).

As well as Peruvian philosopher David Sobrevilla Alcázar (1938-2014), who in *Repensar la tradición occidental* proposes that it is crucial to reframe philosophical problems and build philosophical thought, from our particular situation and regarding our specific needs (Sobrevilla, 1988, p. XII).

Among other questions are: what would happen if today were proven that the Inca cultivated philosophy? Would something in our present or past change? Our presumption is that if the invaders had taken more decades to arrive at the new world, maybe we would have taken another path to reach philosophy, differently than the one taken in the Greek colonies, first we would have cultivated science, then philosophy.

## 5. Philosophy or yachay-wayllukuy

The term *yachay-wayllukuy* meaning philosophy was coined by Mario Mejía, in the eighties and nineties of the past century when he was an editor of a bilingual site Quechua-Spanish, in the Sunday column of the Diary *El Comercio de Lima*. Fernando Manrique Enríquez (Manrique Enriquez, 2002), another scholar coined the term *pacha-sofía* in the sixties to indicate philosophy, however, the Incan meaning of *pachasofía* would be “nature’s wisdom” or “philosophy of nature” and not philosophy in the contemporary sense, hence, we believe that professor Manrique had little knowledge of Incan language. In an analogous way, the term *Runa-sofía* was conceived to indicate philosophical anthropology, in this case, the Quechua term was appropriate. At this time, some of these concepts have been retaken by Josef Estermann (Estermann, 2006).

## 6. Synthesis of the Andean conception of the world

The Andean conception of the world, which is still alive, consists of:

- i. An animist vision of the world.
- ii. A collectivist conception of the human being.
- iii. Polytheistic religiousness. The acceptance of major and minor gods, and the worship of nature.
- iv. An aesthetic vision of the world, where the world is beautiful and there is no concept of sin or evil.
- v. A festive vision of work.
- vi. Collectivist morality.
- vii. Knowledge comes from practice or experience.
- viii. The difference between know-how and knowing. Know-how (“saber”) is information that arises from lived experience, meanwhile, knowing (“conocer”) regards information that originates from theoretical reflection.

#### 7. Differences between thinking and philosophy

We consider that *philosophy* is a type of theoretical, rational, and critical knowledge, which seeks to explain the causes, as well as the sense and final destiny of the cosmos, men, society, and their thought. This type of knowledge is capable of directing its own theoretical instrumentation to self-criticize (Pablo Guadarrama, 2019).

Instead, we call thinking (“pensamiento”), the different non-critical approaches that men have pursued in regard to the world, nature, society, humankind, and God. While the first is theoretical, critical, and logical reason, the second one has other forms of sustained rationality in heterodox logics and lacks self-criticism (Miró Quesada, 1978, p. 21).

#### 8. What cultural elements could be taken from Premodern Andean Thought

The cultural elements that must be considered for a Peruvian Andean philosophy are:

- The acceptance of our national Latin American identity, Andean multicultural and plurilingual. This means to renounce our mental *coloniality* which we undergo conscious or unconsciously. We should free ourselves as much as possible of foreign imposed thought by the official system which is part of the superstructure of domination and alienation. This encompasses the idea that foreign is better; white race is superior and cultured; members of a church are highly spiritual and, therefore, superior to ours; a florid and highly logic language; and a tall stature and white skin, or a name and surname that denote lineage; as well as to stop educating our children under alienating molds.
- To admit the collectivist conception of the Andean man, sustained in the concept of “man’s social being”, considered, as (people). Against the individualistic tendencies that have been scattered by Western culture. In the Andean world a person feels and lives good, as long as the community which

it belongs to prosper, where common good is not reduced to material goods but to spiritual wellness (“*bien-estar*”).

- Admitting that work is a festive activity and not a pitiful one, as it is mentioned in the Genesis. Which, because of collective work (*llank'ay*), is considered a party, that was able to change the evil nature of the Goddess (*Pachamama*).
- Not losing the aesthetic vision of the world even though men suffer in a society that is divided by class.
- That for the Andean men religiousness is not “the opium”. Life of the Indigenous elapses in the presence of major and minor gods. We take “*Pachamama*”, in the sense that nature is a well-being giver if it is labored, worshiped, and taken care of. Currently the celebrations, mainly the religious ones and the villages anniversaries, are occasions to renew cultural roots. An example of this can be found in Frederico Westphalen, Rio Grande del Sur, Brasil, where children and youth dress as their ancestors and dance at the rhythm of their traditional music. Similar events can be found in different provinces of Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Panamá, México, as well as the Peruvian Sierra. We think that catholic religion has been incorporated to native festivities, even if official and religious authorities of invaders deployed repressive and extermination machinery with the intent of expatriating them.
- The Andean ethics must be sustained in principles, such as “man’s social being”, and values that arise from the real and fraternal relation among men. Ethics must explain why in the Inca language there is no word for “bad”, but the “no good”, and how this absence transforms the immoral into “ugly”.
- Strengthen the sense of solidarity in which everyone belongs to the same State.
- Create our own political parties, capable of solving our real national problems.
- Andean philosophy must reflect about the meaning of Being: *Kay*, in the sense of to be and have. From the term “*munay*” which means at the same time, will, desirable and beauty, it is possible to infer that the beautiful and wonderful are desirable. From the term “*yuyay*”, which can be translated to memory, understanding, reason, will, intention; as well as “*yachay*”: knowledge of life; and “*reqsiy*”, rational knowledge (Mejía-Huamán, 2011). That “*chani*” means value, price, and esteem, referring not only to the economic value, but to value in general. That “*qhapaq*” in politics means the capacity to organize and administrate.
- That in The Andes, sexuality is not taboo, however, one cannot abuse of its naturality.
- That, as mentioned by Gamaliel Churata (Arturo Peralta), the Greek myth is the soul of the Western world, the *inkásico* myth should be of a South America with ego (Peralta, 1957, p. 33).



## 9. Conclusion

We believe that Peruvian or Andean Philosophy is in current creation and is a personal stamp of the positive of our Andean conception of the world, its categories being expressed mainly in Quechua Inca and in full validity. This philosophy should be capable of giving a rational explanation to the origin of our problems and must be able to offer solutions, specially since our problems are different than the rest of the Western world. Western philosophies have been created to solve problems of those *pachas* (worlds). We do wrong when we repeat, disseminate, or impose such philosophies into a different *pacha*, such as Peru or The Andes. We must be philosophers and not broadcasters or repeaters of ideas created for other spaces, times, and worlds (*pachas*).

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