

imagine a present and future in which they are agents of history, not its victims; and how they understand themselves today as a people and community is very much rooted in the accounts of violence and victory in the past.

The Jankho Kjarka war, as it is referred to in Wila Kjarka, is not simply an event but a memory to be recalled. The violence within the community and indeed between families cannot be simply forgotten because the result is in daily view: the two cemeteries, the eroding fields, and the ever-decreasing size of Jankho Kjarka. The extreme violence of cannibalism, which is a key feature of accounts, serves to justify the split by demonizing the people of Jankho Kjarka, but its recounting has another purpose: It frames the events in terms of the victory of Wila Kjarka over not only the people of Jankho Kjarka but also the hacendado. Victims become victors, and the true villains, the hacendados, are ultimately defeated. That the violence is remembered and recounted in generic ways serves to offer a foundational myth for the new liberated community.

As twenty-first-century Wila Kjarkaños contemplate their present and future in the days of the latest Bolivian Revolution, they do so through the lens of history: For them the events of the mid-twentieth century are indeed a major point of reference, but it is not a history that will be easily recognized by historians and politicians. For Wila Kjarkaños their historical consciousness profoundly informs the distinction between jaqi and q'ara, which so infects their everyday lives. It is tempting to see these terms as simply mapping on to the conventional categories of indian (or indigenous) and nonindian, but to do so would be to try to understand Wila Kjarkaño identity in outside terms. A clear element here is being a member of a community, the kind of community many outsiders readily identify as being indigenous. But how does one become a member of the community?

FOUR

From Fetuses to Mountain Ancestors



Encarnación lived on the other side of the plaza, but I really got to know her when she fell off a ladder and ripped open her cheek. By that time I had become known for my first-aid kit, and Encarnación came to see me, her teeth visible though her cheek, and asked me to sew it up for her. I was impressed by the calm with which she made this proposition and wondered about the pain she must have been enduring. I must confess that I declined to sew up her cheek, but cleaned and dressed the wound and suggested she go to Choquepata or Sorata and have it sutured professionally.

I did not know it then, but Encarnación was pregnant, and as her belly grew, her scar healed. One night she went into labor. I was aware of some of what was going on: Teodosio had been called. I did not hear cries of pain across the plaza, but this did not surprise me as I had already learned that Encarnación could endure pain stoically. My comadre, Agustina, told me that things were not going well; there were problems. "Will the baby be all right?" I asked stupidly. I got absolutely no response from Agustina. It was, at any rate, a stupid question because one does not refer to *babies* in childbirth but *sullius* (fetuses), and of course, the concern

was primarily about Encarnación. In the developed West, women now very rarely die in childbirth, and the death of a child is seen as a tragedy; in Wila Kjaraka both are relatively frequent, although infant mortality is much higher. The primary concern is more for the mother, a productive and full member of the community, than for the fetus.¹

Encarnación died that night. As far as I can gather, she hemorrhaged. I was led to understand that she gave birth, but the baby subsequently died. No one could or would tell me how Encarnación was given a full community burial, but people simply did not respond to my questions about the baby, who seemed not to have been buried—at least, not in the cemetery, which showed only one new grave.

This episode in the early months of my fieldwork impressed on me how little I knew about anything that happened in Wila Kjaraka. I did not even know what questions to ask. But I did know that this sad incident raised questions about the status of fetuses and babies in Wila Kjaraka, as well as how a mother's health is valued over that of her fetus. It also raised questions about how one becomes a fully fledged member of a community, and how this is recognized and marked, especially at death.

At its simplest, one might suppose that just being born into the community to parents of the community would confer membership, and that a birth would be a highly celebrated event. In fact, birth is a largely private event, not marked by the community, unlike any other socially significant event in one's life. In contrast to other parts of the Bolivian Andes (e.g., Abercrombie 1986; Arnold 1989), there are no descent groups in Wila Kjaraka, so birth does not even confer membership to such a group. That is, there is no notion of descent in the sense of belonging to a lineage understood in genealogical terms. This is not to say, however, that there is no communal sense of identity with the ancestors; in fact, quite the contrary is true: The ancestral spirits, the *achachilas*, give legitimacy to the human use of their land. Nevertheless, even though people are related to the *achachilas*, it would not be correct to say that people understand themselves to be directly descended from them.

In Wila Kjaraka, as appears to be the case in many Austronesian societies (Bloch 1992), personhood is a process that arguably is only completed on the death of an adult, an event that is of far greater social significance than a birth. Personhood, including its gendered aspects, is not understood to be rooted in substance but in practice, how one acts upon the world and the kinds of human and extrahuman relationships one has: The process of being jaqi, being a gendered person, and being a human being

are, unsurprisingly, tightly intertwined. To understand what it means to be jaqi, we need to understand how one becomes human.

In Western discourse one is simply born human, and there are many parts of the Western world where people extend the recognition of human nature to the fetus and embryo. Wherever one positions oneself on this debate, the point at which one is human is clearly defined: at birth, at conception, or when the fetus is viable outside the womb. The Western debates are about the point, the moment that defines human from non-human. Such clear-cut definitions are quite alien to Wila Kjarkeños, who have a much more fluid understanding of ontology.

Wila Kjarkeños use the word *sarnaqaña* to talk about their way of life, and it literally means *walking*. Life is a movement along a path, *thaki* (see also Arnold 2006), and one translation of *custom* is *sarnaqawii*, or one's walking. What makes people different from each other is the way they move through their lives, what they do, and where they are going. People follow different paths, and according to which path one follows one may become jaqi or, indeed, q'ara, and the path begins with how one comes into the world.

The ability to produce children is important to adults and is one of many manifestations of their ability to engage productively with the world and produce from it. At all levels, production is underwritten by the spirits. Fields will not produce if the relevant spirit is not feted, nor will animals reproduce if the right rituals are not performed, and human procreation is similarly assisted by the spirits. There are numerous spirits that have various manifestations, genders, and names. They are not, however, different entities, for they are part of the same tellurian matrix (Sallnow 1987: 126). The major manifestations are the (female) earth spirit; the *pachamama*; the (male) mountain spirits, the *achachilas*; and the house spirit, the *kunturmamani*. It is the *kunturmamani* that is most closely associated with the birth of humans as he presides over household production. People are explicit about these spirits being profoundly connected, and on more than one occasion people have explained the *kunturmamani* to me by saying he is the "pachamama" of the house. The *kunturmamani* "cares for us" (*uywaxixituxa*), where *uywaña* is a word for caring but also for "bringing up," as in caring for a child.

The *kunturmamani* and, by extension the other tellurian beings, are ultimately responsible for the fertility of the married couple and the arrival of the fetus into the world. The act of conceiving and giving birth does not, however, produce a person; whereas birth is an important

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indication that a woman and a man have achieved personhood to the extent that they can productively maintain a household and reproduce, for the child, birth merely produces the raw material out of which a person may be created.

CONCEPTION

Both conceptions and births are reckoned in terms of fiestas. Early on in my fieldwork I was impressed that a midwife (*uswiri*) could so confidently predict that Yula's baby would come on the feast of the Holy Name. The baby was, in fact, born a week and a half later, so I was surprised to hear people not only profess ignorance of the birth date but talk of the birth as having occurred on the feast of the Holy Name. The significance of this is not that people in Wila Kjarka have difficulty with the calendar but that a birth event should occur at a time when the community assembles and fetes one or other aspect of the tellurian spirit world.

Conception too, is said to occur during fiestas. To comprehend the importance of fiestas in birth, one must appreciate the difference a fiesta makes to the life of villagers. For most of the year, the people of Wila Kjarka live and work in their household units, occasionally exchanging labor with close kin and fictive kin. At these times there is little social contact between villagers; there is, for example, no generalized visiting, even among kin. The exception would be when children visit an elderly grandparent to take them food or when a sister or mother visits early in the morning. In these cases, close kin sit in the doorway or just outside it. Nor do people stop to chat on the way to and from the fields. People do talk during work breaks, but that is within the family unit and compadres who are helping each other. Young men often play soccer an hour before sunset, but there is very little of what one might describe as generalized sociality.

The contrast between the profane time of day-to-day existence and the sacred time of fiestas is quite striking: During fiestas, all agricultural work ceases or is handed over to adolescents and children; in some of the larger fiestas, the adults of the community eat and drink together for several days. It is a time of heightened sensitivity: People cry, laugh, shout, fight, and flirt with great intensity.

It is during fiestas that the community is most engaged with the powers of the tellurian spirits who bring rain, enable the earth to produce crops, confer wisdom and agency on people, and also accord humans the

ability to produce children. Communication is generally achieved through making offerings directly to the underworld spirits in the form of alcohol, coca, cigarettes, and sacrificed animals, but also through households sharing food, alcohol, and conviviality. The consumption of alcohol on such occasions, as Thierry Saignes points out, generally for the Andes, "contributes in uniting men with themselves as well as with spirits, gods or the dead (its use annuls the division between sacred and profane spheres)" (1989: 104).² The sharing of coca leaves also has a similar effect as Catherine Allen has carefully documented for a community in Peru (1988: 137).

An important feature of fiestas is the strong sense of community solidarity that is expressed, and people went to great pains to point out to me how everyone in the village was in attendance (even if this was sometimes not the case). In Wila Kjarka there is a running tension between household interests and community interests—a conflict that is never ultimately resolved (cf. Albó 1975). Indeed, it is also the case that many tensions surface during fiestas, assisted no doubt by alcohol. As people are sleep deprived and drunk, these tensions surface, often violently, but they are also quickly resolved, and this may have a cathartic effect in preventing disputes and rivalries from smoldering indefinitely.

More positively, fiestas are occasions when the whole community acts as one household sharing food, drink, and coca together as well as dancing, which has an explicitly procreative aspect. Dancing is said to sexually stimulate the earth goddess, the pachamama, and thus increases her munificence of procreative powers. It is thus through fiestas and the sharing of food, alcohol, and coca with each other and the spirits that the community and its identity is created and affirmed.

There are two broad reasons why conceptions are believed to occur during fiestas. First, because this is the time when the enabling power of the spirits is most immanent, and second, because this is when people are more relaxed, less inhibited, and consequently more amorous. Several people from Wila Kjarka told me that sexual intercourse between couples occurred with much greater frequency during fiestas than in the periods between them.³ A sharp contrast is made between the sex acts of adolescents, which occasionally occur when they are herding (cf. Millones and Pratt 1989: 35), and the sex acts of adults, which occur within a stable relationship and in the domesticated space of the household. Adolescent sex is considered "wild" because the adolescents are unmarried and is performed beyond the community boundaries. As such, they invite neither sanction, condemnation, or interest on the part of adults (de la Cadena

1997: 141; Harris 1980; Isbell 1976: 59; Millones and Pratt 1989: 38–40). These acts are not so much immoral as valueless, since they occur in a place far from the community between people who are socially immature. Luis Millones and Mary Louise Pratt suggest that adolescents adopt the role of violating the sexual mores of the community, whereas married people reinforce it. I am not sure this is an accurate interpretation of attitudes toward adolescent sex—at least, not for Wila Kjaraka. In my view, it is not so much that adolescents break rules, it is that there are simply very few rules for them to break. Sex between adolescents beyond the confines of the community simply does not matter: Nobody cares. Once these acts occur within the community, they become much more significant, and the clear assumption is that the couple will form a stable union. The movement from sex in the high mountains to sex within the community characteristically occurs during fiesta time when young couples traditionally choose to elope or, rather, formalize their union.

Young couples may very well have initiated a sexual relationship long before, and this relationship may indeed be known if not acknowledged by both sets of parents; but the first stage in a marriage is when a young man takes a young woman to his parents' house, where they spend the night. If a young woman or girl were to become pregnant before this event it would be very difficult to persuade the potential father to support her, but once the relationship is made public in this way he would be considered responsible for the maintenance of any offspring.

Conception occurs with the union of semen and menstrual blood (*jatha wilampi juntasiya*). As a result, some Wila Kjarkeños stated that conception is easiest during menstruation—a belief shared by people in the Aymara-speaking communities of Qaqachaka (Arnold 1989: 202; Arnold and Yápa 1996). Menstruation is known as *wila phassi*, the monthly blood, but the clear reference to monthly intervals notwithstanding, many women from Wila Kjaraka do not menstruate regularly due to long periods of lactation, frequent pregnancies, and poor nutrition.

Despite the fact that the man and woman contribute to the creation of the fetus, there is no sense that semen and blood contribute to certain parts, such as blood and bones (cf. Bloch 1992), or that in conception there is a sense of bloodlines and semen lines intermingling (cf. Arnold 1989), as indeed we might suspect, given that there is no meaningful sense of "lineage" in Wila Kjaraka. Without such corporate units, or matrilineal and patrilineal kin recognized in a distinguishable way, ideas

surrounding conception quite simply reflect the belief that men and women create children together.

Blood and semen combine to create a growing formless bloody mass (*wila miriqa*) until the fourth month of gestation, when the fetus begins to move. At this point, the fetus has hair and bones and is known as a fetus (*sullu*). People say that if a pregnancy aborts before the fetus begins to move in the belly, what comes out is blood and tissue of no determinate shape; after this, it looks like a fetus.

Throughout the pregnancy the couple will make regular offerings to the condor-falcon (*kunturmamani*), who is the principal household god. This is especially important should the woman become sick during pregnancy. Offerings made to the *kunturmamani* will ensure that her spirit (*ajayu*) returns and the pregnancy proceeds to its full course.

During pregnancy, the woman will continue her chores, but they will gradually diminish, particularly the heavy ones, as the pregnancy develops. A pregnant mother has access to specialists in case there are any problems during her pregnancy: the *yatiri* (shaman) and the *uswiri*, one of the many women in the community who has experience with childbirth. The *yatiri* deals with problems of a more spiritual nature, those matters that involve the *ajayu*. The *uswiri* massages the abdomen and predicts the date of the birth. This date is the date of the fiesta during which the *uswiri* believes the child will be born. She will also make sure the fetus is positioned properly by performing *thalthapiña*—having the mother lie on an *awayu* (carrying cloth) and maneuvering the awayu by the ends.

BIRTH

A birth is very much a private, household affair, and not much attention is accorded it by villagers beyond those directly involved. A birth generally takes place at home, where the mother-to-be is attended by her husband. In Wila Kjaraka, it is the man's duty to make sure his wife is comfortable, warm, and well fed. She will birth squatting or standing with her knees bent, supported by her husband or whoever is attending (cf. Bradby 1998: 51; Platt 2002). The man's role is also to fill the room with smoke, as this is thought to assist the birth and specifically move the contractions on (cf. Platt 2002: 139). The mother is given lamb broth as well as other rich and fortifying foods during labor and for several days after the birth. When a birth is difficult, the *yatiri*, Teodosio, is sometimes called. He told me he cuts his nails and spreads lard on his arms in order to help him

get the baby out. Sometimes, he said, he has to put his arms in up to his elbows, but then it comes out easily.⁴

The focus here is unambiguously on maternal, not fetal, health. Tristan Platt and his colleagues (2002) have suggested that recent developments in reproductive health policy have moved the focus away from maternal health to fetal health at the expense of women. This is consistent with the position of the Catholic Church, which prioritizes fetal health over maternal health, even if the woman should die as a result. I concur with Platt and his colleagues, who observe that the death of an infant is an occasion for sadness and tears but "does not even remotely have the traumatic significance of the death of a mother" (Platt 2002: 130). For Platt a parturient woman is engaged in nothing less than a battle for life, an inversion of the male role on the battlefield (2002: 132).

What is most certainly the case is that motherhood in Wila Kjaraka is understood very differently from that of the self-sacrificing mother that is referenced in school celebrations and national discourses, much less the *mater dolorosa* of orthodox Catholicism. In a culture where reproduction is not valued particularly highly and women are admired more for their productive capacities than their reproductive ones, women are neither defined in terms of the children they produce nor even are they principally defined as mothers. Women are much more likely to be ashamed than proud of the number of children to which they have given birth. Birth is most certainly not a singular experience that defines a woman as an adult or fully contributing member of society (although it certainly plays a role); rather, it is a dangerous and potentially traumatic event that must be overcome.

Whether women in Wila Kjaraka think of themselves as warriors or not, they are certainly aware that they have a very good chance of not surviving childbirth, since they will know many women who have died giving birth. Most births, happily, do not end in this way, and once the baby is born the attendant cuts the umbilical cord and waits for the placenta to emerge. The cut has to be measured from the umbilicus: two fingers for a female child and three fingers for a male child, so that his penis will grow. This is a very rare example of an instance when Wila Kjarkeños explicitly recognize that gender is rooted in physical differences, because gender—as with personhood generally—is usually spoken of in terms of processes and activities. It is obvious that, even though they treat small children as genderless, parents know that they will grow into male and female; that the outer expression of gender is ultimately attributable to the genitals

they have a birth; or rather, that genitals signal gender, even if they do not necessarily determine it. Moreover, Teodosio's account of what must be done to ensure that males and females grow properly suggests that physical sex does not develop "naturally" but, rather, it must be assisted by the agency of the knife.

In this, people in Wila Kjaraka are similar to those cultures that practice genital cutting in order to ensure the "proper" development of a child's genitalia, be they to remove the foreskin of the penis to make it protrude more, or removing the clitoris "in case it grows large like a penis" (Talle 1992). In these cases, people understand the physical body to develop into male and female with the assistance of human intervention. Even in Wila Kjaraka, as in other Andean communities, where people do not see genitals as the root explanation of gender, it is interesting to note that genital development is dependent, at least partly, on human intervention; and consequently, human culture plays a role in determining someone's sex. Even at this stage of development, one's identity as male or female as well as one's identity as jaqi or qara is part of a social process; it is not simply "given."

After the umbilical cord is cut, attention is given to the placenta. Teodosio comments: "The hot placenta has fat, and with a large needle I take that fat out and, with the blood of the placenta, I cover [the baby] completely.⁵ The fat must be white, opaque, and that is why it must be taken out with a needle. It is with that fat that the child is spread." Covering the child with this fat protects it from bad airs and malign spirits.

Children are very vulnerable to illness because their ajayu spirit is not considered to be well settled in the body. They are consequently prone to ajayu flight, which causes illness, and, if it is not quickly returned, will result in death. This vulnerability to soul flight, which can be occasioned by something as simple as fright, is evidence of their tenuous tenancy of the land of people on the surface of the earth.

As the child enters the world of humans, the physical link with the spirit below must be cut. The placenta, part of the world of spirits, must be carefully returned. After the birth, the placenta is taken at night to a place in the stream where the stream spirits, the *sirintus*, dwell, and there it is washed (*sirintaña*). Then it is returned to the home, where it is buried in a corner of the house of the kunturmamani, the house spirit.

The baby and placenta come into the world together, and the umbilical cord is what links the child to the world from which it came. It is not surprising then that the umbilical cord is a very powerful offering to the

bilical cord cut (a task usually left to the child's father), the child can now grow up to be a (gendered) human being, but the placenta returns to the world of the spirits, which is associated with the underground and with darkness. Daubing the child with fat from the placenta offers it protection in its new world, and it can also be seen as a form of blessing on the part of the kunturmamani.

Once the child is born it is cleaned and swaddled, but it is not fed until at least twenty-four hours after birth; in some areas, I was told, the baby is not fed for three days. The reason given is that this makes the baby hardy, but it may also be the case that a very weak baby will die quickly and thus not tax the resources of the family. Babies are tightly swaddled, and around the swaddling clothes is tied a wide woven belt called a *wak'a*. The *wak'a* is usually woven by the mother, and its purpose is to protect the child from evil spirits and to keep the soul, the *ajayu*, bound within the body. There is also the belief that if the child is not tightly bound it will be deformed.⁶

If a child dies shortly after birth and before it has been formally named (see below), he or she is not buried in the cemetery, but at some distance from the village in a place called *Kimurpata*. As Domitilia told me, "Those without name are buried down by the waters where there are many rocks; down there by the river they are buried. Six I have buried there, six (*Wawaxa k'irt'añaya, alitattawayachispaxaya*)."

At this stage of its existence the baby is totally unsocialized and in a sense nonhuman, for it has neither speech nor even a name. An unnamed baby is considered still to be a fetus (*sullu*), and it is for this reason that data on neonatal deaths are so difficult to obtain. It is impossible to know if one is recording infanticide or neonatal deaths, and after some time, mothers tend not to consider neonatal deaths as births at all. On several occasions when talking to women about the number of babies they had had, they omitted births of babies who had died in the first weeks or even months of life and of which I happened to be aware. It is during the period before the naming ceremony that infanticide, when it does occur, is most likely to take place. Infanticide during this period is considered something like a late abortion. Nancy Scheper-Hughes has put forward a similar interpretation for mothers in Brazil who cease to care for their babies because they, for one reason or another, do not think they are worth making the effort (1992: 432-33). Unwanted pregnancies in Wila Kjaraka are usually dealt with by recourse to herbal abortifacients or, exceptionally, by a visit to the pharmacist in the nearest market town. In

yourself (*qullasiñawa*). You must take some medicine, and you just need to expel the fetus (*jaqsuyañaspaya*) . . . You drink, and then it comes out." This is not a pronatalist community, and people are very aware of the cost to the household of too many children as well as the burden of children who will not be productive.

Contraception is not easily available in Wila Kjaraka. Coitus interruptus is not widely practiced, and many couples complain of the difficulties of abstinence: "It is too easy to make a mistake (*pantijasñajamapuniwa*). Indeed, given that sexual activity increases during fiestas, when people are very often drunk, it is easy to see why contraception, by whatever method, is not deemed to be very successful in Wila Kjaraka. Although people clearly desire fewer children and often spoke to me about methods of contraception, it is not generally openly discussed. Arminda Chinu told me that people don't talk about it for fear of being criticized: "Some speak badly, others will scold and criticize; that is why people remain silent."⁷ According to the health worker in Choquepata, only two women in Wila Kjaraka are availing themselves of free contraception. In the health worker's view, this is because women are ignorant, because their husbands want to have children, or because they themselves want to have children. Many women in Wila Kjaraka, however, are wary of the standard medication that is often given in the health post in Choquepata. This is one woman's experience:

I went for one year, and for one year I did not bleed; but then I became pregnant. It didn't work: I had the injections in vain; and now I have my daughter . . . She is eight months old now. I went. You cannot make a mistake; you cannot go too early or too late. You must go on the right day. I went, but the attendant wasn't there. I had to go the next day and then she gave me the injection, but it didn't work. They say that you cannot make any mistake.

This experience, if it is generalized, may account for the poor uptake of contraception in Wila Kjaraka. Other methods are either unavailable, considered unsafe (such as the coil), or too expensive. In practice, then, few options are open to women in Wila Kjaraka to limit their pregnancies. Some people despair at the strain of bringing up children in very limited circumstances. One woman clearly had enough: "I am in great sorrow. I wish [my children] would all die; I wish they would die I say. They make me very angry; they make each other angry. I only have boys and they

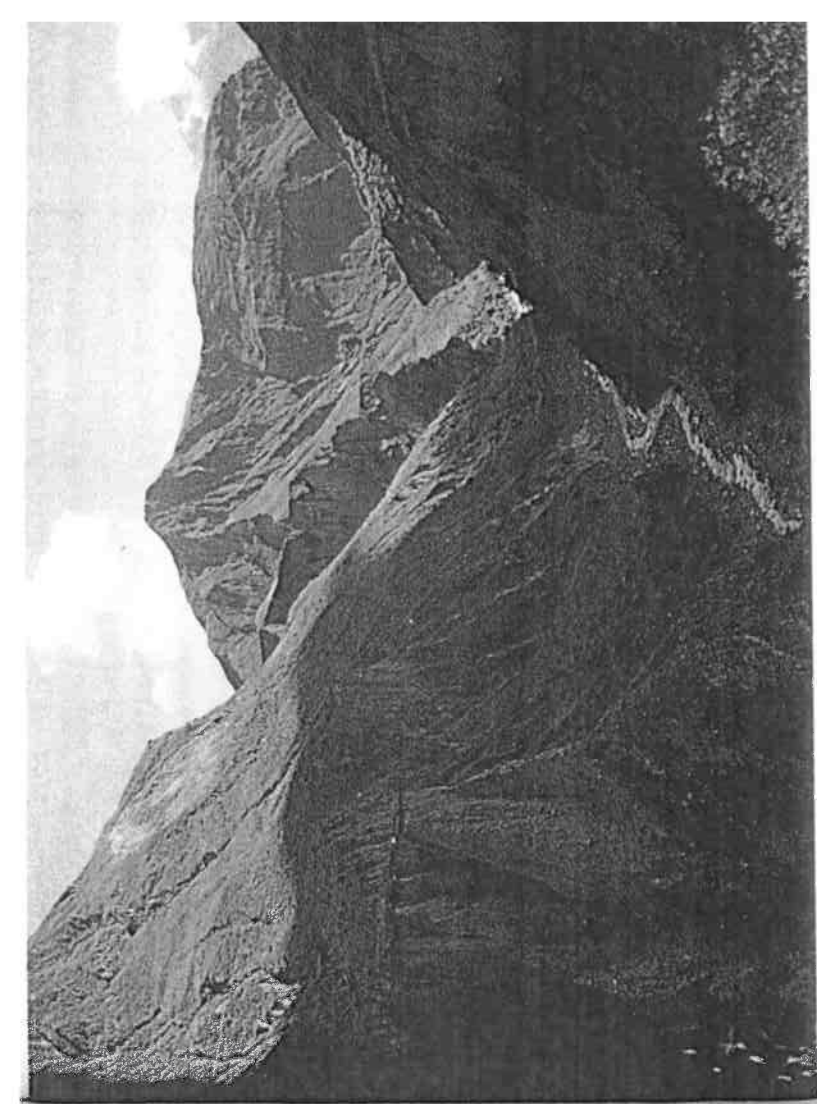
are always fighting.⁸⁸ Such despair is extreme, but many people share the sense of frustration and the desire to have fewer children. It is very rare for people to speak of the joys of having children.

People do, therefore, attempt to limit their family size through abstinence or abortion. These are always difficult decisions, but sometimes difficult decisions have to be made after the birth of a baby. People in Wila Kjaraka are poor and some are very poor, to the point that caring for a sick or severely handicapped infant puts an unbearable strain on the family's resources. Data on infanticide are difficult to obtain but, as far as I can gather, infanticide occurs when the baby has a physical defect or if it appears quite sick. Some babies are simply left to die, but I have also been told that some babies are simply left out on a cold night and other friends suggested that they are smothered. People are naturally uncomfortable about this topic and, unsurprisingly, some people not only deny that infanticide occurs in Wila Kjaraka, they also say that neonates are buried in the cemetery rather than Kimurpata.

One morning as we sat around her cooking fire shelling beans together, my comadre Maruja told me that a long, long time ago, people used to throw newborns—some dead, some alive—off Kimurpata: "I have never been to Kimurpata; I don't even know where it is!" However, a little later in the conversation, when I asked again where Kimurpata was, I received the following directions: "Follow the path past the Wila Kjaraka cemetery and beyond the turn to the Jankho Kjaraka cemetery. Don't go down the path toward Sorata, just keep going to the cliff. It is right above [the place called] *Siku sikuri*. That is Kimurpata. But I have never been there."

Kimurpata is above the big river, *Jachá Jawira*, at a place where the waters thunder down over large boulders through a narrow canyon. This is a place of water spirits, *sirinus*, par excellence, and there is a homology between taking neonates to the river and the practice of washing the placenta at the stream where the water gushes out. Both places are like the fetus and placenta themselves: wet and emanating from the realm of the achachilas and other spirits of the manqhapacha. By tossing the bodies of babies over Kimurpata it would seem people are simply returning them whence they came.

Teodosio told me why it was important to bury the unnamed babies in Kimurpata: "[If we buried them in the cemetery] it would be a sin. The lightning from above with bolts would come and thus that lightning would make our (jaqi) bones tremble and so enter our bodies. And so, then, all this would come to pass."⁸⁹



The view of the river with Kimurpata on the left above the escarpment called *Siku sikuri*, so named because the formation looks like paripipes (*sikuri*). The river flows fast to the land below, where the dead dwell.

Lightning is quintessentially a message from the achachilas, and indeed being hit by lightning is one of the diagnostics of having been chosen to be a yatiri. In the case of burying an unnamed baby in the cemetery, the lightning is clearly punishment from the gods, and there is an interesting parallel here with the punishment from the Christian god who brings hail on those communities that do not baptize their babies. But why would the achachilas visit such violence upon jaqi? The achachilas get angry when the normal exchanges between humans and ancestors are interrupted or blocked. In this case it appears that unnamed babies (i.e., fetuses) simply do not belong to the realm of humans and must be returned directly to the achachilas and the wet and dark world below (which is why they are buried down by the river, deep in a gorge). To bury them in the earth is to imply a relationship with achachilas that simply does not exist and,

among other things, would delay their reincorporation into the world of the ancestors.

Tristan Platt, basing his writing on the Quechua-speaking Macha some distance to the south of Wila Kjaraka, presents these relationships much more clearly. He argues that the fetus is animated by the souls of pagan ancestors and that every birth is a reenactment of the mythohistorical event when *chullpas* were defeated by the sun and humans became Christian (2002: 128). According to this argument, fetuses are *chullpas*, and some support is given to this argument by the fact that the sun/son of God is inimical to newborns. The care of infants in this regard goes beyond a concern that they may overheat or burn, but rather that the sun's rays are positively harmful even in small doses. Whether each birth is in some manner a reenactment of the arrival of the sun and destruction of the *chullpas* is a different matter; and I could find no data in Wila Kjaraka that resonate with such an intriguing argument.

What is clear, however, is that fetuses do not have the status in Wila Kjaraka as Christian souls, which, according to the Roman Catholic Church since 1871, fetuses have from the point of conception. Of course, the Church could not have come to this position before the late nineteenth century, since medical technology only confirmed the union of egg and sperm and its role in procreation in 1854. Although Lazzaro Spallazani (1729–99) observed the fertilization of frog egg and sperm, it wasn't until the nineteenth century, with the work of George Newport (1854) and William Harvey, that the process became better understood and the implications for human conception fully accepted. Before this time the Catholic Church considered the point of ensoulment or animation to occur when the fetus begins to move, when "quickening" occurs (between 14 and 18 weeks of gestation), although there was some debate as to whether male fetuses were ensouled before female ones. In turn, it took until well into the twentieth century for the idea to be widely accepted, even in conservative Catholic communities, that aborting fetuses in the early stages of pregnancy was murder. It is therefore not the least bit surprising that this recent development in Catholic theology has not been fully embraced in indigenous communities in Bolivia when priests are still struggling to persuade people that the purpose of baptism is other than avoiding hail. On one occasion I was talking to a Spanish priest who had spent over twenty years in Bolivia, learning Quechua and administering to a wide-flung parish. He bemoaned the fact that, after more than twenty years, he still hadn't persuaded local people that baptism is about joining

the community of loving Christians and has nothing to do with averting the wrath of God in the form of hail. "Twenty years?" I responded, "Isn't it more like five hundred?"

The general weakness of the Catholic Church's ability to impose orthodoxy on indigenous people notwithstanding, there is a reticence in Wila Kjaraka in talking about abortion (*sullsuña*), more so among men. One Saturday morning I met up with three friends from Wila Kjaraka in the market of Sorata and invited them to a pizza. Sorata has a plethora of pizzerias. Some years ago, there was a very good Italian restaurant, and its Italian owner trained his staff. When he closed his restaurant, many of his waiters opened pizzerias in the main square and, by keeping overheads low, they all seemed to survive. The plaza of Sorata, with its restaurants, cyber cafés, and shops selling cell phones, seems a world away from Wila Kjaraka. Over a large ham-and-black-olives pizza we talked about the changes taking place in Wila Kjaraka and we also talked about family size. For my three companions, whom I have known since the day I arrived in Wila Kjaraka, having smaller families is as much a sign of progress as the new road, chemical fertilizer, and owning a cell phone.

These men agreed that contraception was damaging to a woman's health, abortion in particular. "You have to take care of yourself," said Zenobio. "You can sleep together or not, it is up to you. Make love or not."¹⁰ Perhaps because we were in the shadow of the church or simply in the center of Sorata negotiating stringy mozzarella, they were all keen to demonstrate to me that they were not party to the dubious customs of which I may have heard. Yet they showed detailed familiarity with the practice of abortion, even if all these incidents occurred "in the past" or somewhere else. Typical was the story of incest in, perhaps inevitably, Jankho Kjaraka, where the girl buried the baby alive and the father/grandfather was expelled from the community. In Wila Kjaraka men distance themselves from these accounts even more than do women, although in general people are much more relaxed in talking about their lives and practices than they are in Sorata. For example, as we shared our pizza, my friends were keen to impress upon me that they did not follow "pagan" rituals, even though I have participated in many of these with them in Wila Kjaraka. People are clearly aware that such practices are taboo, especially in the mestizo world of pizzerias and cyber cafés.

What I found no evidence of in Wila Kjaraka is that men sought to control their wives' fertility or prevented them from planning their families; men were certainly interested in having a relatively small number of chil-

dren. In this, men and women generally concur: The ideal family size is four healthy children. If it is true that women asked me about contraception more often than men, it is also true that men showed a keen interest. I gave many demonstrations on condom use on the handle of a hoe to men, and this was most certainly not my initiative. Condoms, however, have to be bought or obtained from the health post in Choquepata, where people have a profound mistrust of the health workers. In other Aymara-speaking communities, anal sex (*chimajat ikasiña*) is apparently used as a form of contraception, as reported to me by a resident of the altiplano, but I found no evidence that it was widely practiced in Wila Kjaraka, where it seems not to be considered a normal sexual practice.

Nor did I find any suggestion that men thought that contraception would lead to promiscuity on the part of their wives, or even that a large number of children was a sign of virility. The kind of sexual jealousy that is iconic of machismo in much of Latin America, including indigenous Latin America, appears largely absent in Wila Kjaraka. I am not saying that no one is ever jealous but, rather, that it is not something about which men or women are particularly anxious.

NAMING

Despite the widespread anxiety surrounding family size and births, many babies are, of course, born in Wila Kjaraka. The newborn's status as fetus clearly indicates that birth in itself does not produce persons, even if it does provide some of the raw materials: Personhood is something that is ritually conferred on a being by the community and the world of the spirits. The first ritual of life is the naming ceremony, known as *sutiyaña*, which takes place a couple of weeks after the birth. *Sutiyaña* is a fairly minor affair and, unlike all other ceremonies marking a change of status, it is attended only by immediate family members and, sometimes, the catechist appointed by a priest, who baptizes the child. This is the only form of Christian baptism that takes place in Wila Kjaraka until the priest's visit, which occurs on average once every two to three years. On these occasions, the priest performs the baptism once again, but it is a very different affair. The priest's baptism is done in the school, where he baptizes twenty or more children in a row. The importance of this baptism for parents is that the office of the priest makes the relationship they have with the godparents (*padrinos*) much more formal and, consequently, implies a stronger bond.

For the *sutiyaña*, salt and water are mixed into a paste and then daubed on the baby's mouth and head. Salt is considered to be a quintessentially human attribute, and anointing the infant with salt is the first step of incorporation into human society.¹¹ The fact that the child is daubed on the mouth is consistent with the belief that speech is a fundamentally human characteristic.¹² Teodosio told me that he anoints the child twice, once for each of the two "souls," the *kuraji* and *ajayu*; both are particularly vulnerable in a newborn. The distinction among *kuraji*, *ajayu*, and *chuyma* was never clearly explained to me, but all three animate the body of a human: *kuraji* (Sp. *coraje*) may linger after death as a ghost and is the least elaborated of the three; *ajayu* is the soul that wanders and must be reattached to the body to prevent death and after death to prevent the *ajayu* from wandering angrily in search of its body; *chuyma* is sometimes translated as "heart," as it is believed to be rooted in vital organs.

Body fat, which the paste of salt and water is said to resemble, is believed to be a source of essential life force (*chuyma*), and the diminution or loss of it entails illness or death. This is how Teodosio told me he cured a child from *ajayu* loss:

With the Rosary I call it. Before this, I perform *llawi* with everything. I call it from these four places here. I pay and after paying I say: "Ajayu, do not tarry in returning." With the child's clothes or some other item I make the soul return. It comes like a shadow—not a person—just like a shadow. And then I bring it, and with that shadow I envelop the baby; and with a blessing to the left I tie up the baby well. I can also see the *chuyma* through reading coca leaves. That is how I cure the baby.

Fat (*lik'i*) is a common offering to the autochthonous spirits as a substitute for human sacrifice (Bastien 1978; Sallnow 1987). Here, however, the offering of the "fat" is reversed. By being anointed with salt, the child enters human society, and this creates a debt: The debt can be delayed by offerings such as the sacrifice of live animals or animal fat, but in the end the human body and its life force must return whence it came. Immediately at birth the child is greased with the fat of the placenta, a week later she or he is daubed with salt in a "fatty" paste on its mouth. Both of these acts are to protect the child and mark its entrance into the human world, but the difference is that the salt is a different kind of fat to that of the placenta; it is fat that is a product of human agency. It also marks ambivalence about the relationship with the earth spirits: The earth spirits are known not to like salt, and the shaman will often desist from eating salt

before communing with the achachilas. The salt distinguishes the human world from the chthonic world, even as the chthonic world is the source of human agency.

Now we can make more sense of why birth and conception are always reckoned with respect to fiestas when there is no shortage of empirical evidence to contradict this (at least in the case of birth). Considering births and conceptions as occurring during fiestas—that is, sacred time, when there is an intensity of human energy and an irruption of chthonic energy (Allen 1988)—is a recognition that fertility and human life are dependent on the supernatural world. It is not only that during fiestas people are closest to and in greatest communication with the spirit world but also that during fiesta time the tellurian beings are most satisfied. Fiestas are explicitly seen as times when one “pays” the spirits. In return for this payment the spirits of the mountains and earth bring rain, ensure the fertility of the crops and the well-being of people, and, as we have seen, ensure human fertility as well.

Immediately after the anointing with salt, the child is usually baptized by the local catechist. After establishing its relationship with the earth spirits, the child is anointed in a ritual that makes him or her a Christian (*kristiyani*). Baptism is important to the child for, apart from having a relationship with the earth spirits, he or she must also live in a world where other forces may dominate. In a Christian age, not to be a Christian leaves one vulnerable to the powers of a hostile God who will destroy crops with hail if a child is not baptized. The *sutiyaña* ceremony introduces the child not only to its family but also to the spirit world and its relationships with the various presiding deities: a reciprocal relationship with the tellurian spirits and a relationship with the Christian celestial spirit marked by negative reciprocity. The Christian god rarely intervenes in the life of humans except to wreak his vengeance, thus the common saying that “God only punishes.” Possession of a baptismal certificate is, furthermore, the easiest way of obtaining a Bolivian identity card and, in practice, the only way open to indians. This baptism is not officially recognized by the Church, and the priest must perform an official baptism himself at a later date, either in the cantonal capital for a substantial fee or for a much smaller fee when he makes his biannual visit.

Both aspects of this ritual indicate that the acquisition of identity, and indeed personhood, is contingent on the sanction of society. A person from Wila Kjarka is defined by his or her insertion into the group—the primary kinship group and the extended network of fictive kin—and the

reciprocal ties he or she has with this network and with the community in which he or she lives (cf. Albó 1985: 8; Spedding 1989: 292). This process of inclusion begins with the first naming, but it is not until the first haircutting, the *rutucha*, that the child is ritually introduced into the community. Somewhat ironically, despite being accorded a name in the *sutiyaña*, it is not until this second ceremony that the child is actually addressed by his or her name. Until this time the child is referred to by the generic “*wawa*” which means “baby.”

RUTUCHA

The *rutucha* exists all over the Andes (Allen 1988; Bastien 1978; Carter and Mamani 1982) and marks the entry of a child into the world as a social person. *Rutucha* in Wila Kjarka is frequently referred to as *muruña*, which means haircutting but also refers to the cutting off of a bull's horns; a hornless bull is known as *muru*. *Muruña* in both cases refers to the cutting off of the “wild” part of bulls or children, that is, the domestication of the subject (Harris 1982: 64).

The *rutucha* takes place when the child is approximately a year and a half old and has already begun to speak. Unlike the naming ceremony, the *rutucha* involves the wider community. The ceremony begins with a libation to the spirit of the house, the *kunturmamani*. *Kunturmamani* comes from a combination of two words, *kuntur* (condor) and *mamani* (falcon), birds associated with the tellurian forces, especially when they act as messengers. The *párinu* and *márina* (godfather and godmother) start cutting the child's matted locks and put money for the child in an *inkuña*, a woven cloth used for offerings made from llama wool. This process is repeated by all the adults present, albeit with considerably less money. If there is any hair left after all have had their turn, the godparents finish the cut. The locks of hair are then put in the rafters of the house. Then, all those present join in thanks to the *pachamama* and the *kunturmamani* and proceed with communal drinking and eating. The drinking is also accompanied by coca chewing, with the mother of the child passing around sugar and sweets wrapped in coca leaves. This is one of the rare occasions when women chew coca, and the sweet element differentiates this type of chewing from that usually done by men, which, instead, is done with a reactive agent based on ash (*yuhita*).¹³

The haircutting ceremony is the ritual that formally introduces the child into the community, whereas the *sutiyaña* marks the inclusion of



Rutucha Valerio has her hair cut by Pastuku, followed by all the adults present. Note the bank note in his hand, which he will put, along with the hair, in the *inkuña*.

the child into the kinship unit. It also marks the transition from infancy (*wawa*) to becoming a boy or girl (*yuaqlla* and *imilla*, respectively). After this point, the child's death may be officially mourned and commemorated during *Todos Santos*, or the Feast of the Dead, where favorite food may be placed at his or her grave, as is the case with deceased adults. Even so, it is rare for a child to be mourned in this way, and it is almost exclusively adults who are remembered during *Todos Santos*.

The first haircutting also marks the beginning of the age of responsibility, and from this age forward the child is said to begin with household chores. In practice, however, a couple of years pass before the child begins to make a significant contribution to the household. The point, though, is that the child is deemed capable of productive labor—to act upon the world productively—an ability that is deemed to come ultimately from

the mountain spirits. Related to this is the importance of labor in creating and defining human beings. A person is not someone who simply is but someone who does; that is, personhood is processual. A gendered person, similarly, is someone who performs the tasks appropriate to a particular gender and only secondarily a person of a particular physical sex. Thus, a child does not become a social person until she or he is capable of performing certain tasks. This ability is accorded by the community and the earth spirits, who first publicly recognize the child at the *rutucha* ceremony. The child moves from a semiwild state—with dirty, matted locks—in which he or she is not even referred to by name, to becoming a human being, recognized and anointed by the community and capable of productive action. The *rutucha* can thus be seen as the “spiritual” birth of the child as opposed to the biological birth much in the same way as baptism in Christianity acts as a spiritual birth for the child. Maurice Bloch and Stephen Guggenheim's (1981) observation that such “second birth” rituals imply that biological birth is insufficient to create a “proper” human being holds equally well for the *rutucha*. It is clear that a baby born without any ritual is considered something less than a person in any sense.

CREATING PERSONS: MEN AND WOMEN

I implied above that the *rutucha* is the ceremony that created a socially recognized human being, but, in fact, it would be more correct to see the *rutucha* as just one of the first rungs on the ladder to personhood. The process of life is one of progressive integration into the life of the community, as one comes ever closer to the world of the spirits (cf. Pitarch 2010). In other rituals through life, such as marriage and the assumption of community offices, people approximate more and more the state of the mountain ancestors. With maturity one becomes more and more integrated into the community, until some years after death one loses identity and becomes part of the generalized earth matrix of the chthonic spirits. Out of this generalized force comes human life and agency.

Although one might consider personhood to be only fully achieved at death, it is marriage that confers on an individual the status of person on a social and practical level. Marriage is the union of a man and a woman, and it is this union that completes the person. There is a strong sense, in Wila Kjarka as in other parts of the Andes,¹⁴ that without a marriage partner an individual is seriously deficient and will have great difficulties in reaching the world of the dead. Marriage in Wila Kjarka is frequently

referred to as *juqichasina*, which means quite literally "the making of a person." To be an unmarried adult is highly anomalous, and if such a person were to die, I was told, they should be buried with a chicken or rooster (depending on their sex) in order to go to the other world complete; but there were no unmarried adults in Wila Kjaraka.

Being prematurely widowed is more than a personal tragedy, and the community becomes very much involved in matching up widows and widowers. A good example is that of the case of Edmundo Chino and Flora Alwiri. Edmundo Chino had been a widower for almost four years since his wife died after suffering from "an illness of the uterus," leaving him with two young daughters. When Flora Alwiri's husband, Alfredo, died from having his fat stolen by a kharisiri (see the next chapter), Flora was already a grandmother and nine years older than Edmundo; everyone clearly thought they would make an ideal couple. Despite the considerable encouragement from all quarters, Flora and Edmundo showed no signs of coming together. Something had to be done. And so it was that, during the funeral of Mateo Mamani in Villa Esquivel, Flora and Edmundo were bundled into a house, which was then locked behind them by Armando, Edmundo's brother, and not opened until the following morning. The wake continued outside and occasionally people made suggestions, doubtless helpful ones, as to how Edmundo and Flora should be spending their time. Little was said when the door was opened the following morning, but from that day on Edmundo and Flora have lived together.

Edmundo and Flora, however, tell it slightly differently. Edmundo says that they got drunk together at fiestas and talked to each other (*umawiniakan paritawayapta umasina*), whereas Flora says Armando "grabbed us together" (*aphapayaxitu*).¹⁵

Flora and Edmundo's second experience of marriage is somewhat unusual, but their accounts are quite typical in their laconic style and brevity and the absence of any discourse on romance or affect. I asked many people over many years how they came to meet their partner, and whatever the age or sex, no one ever gave a romantic account of meeting their spouse. Despite considerable prompting at times, people just said that they met and then got together. A typical response was "He came to me and asked me if I wanted to be with him. And so we were together." Older women say that their husbands asked their parents or even that their parents forced them to marry. Juana, for example, told me that her husband's mother arranged her marriage: "That's how it was back then. They got us together whether we wanted to or not."¹⁶ Men say rather similar things:

"She is from here, so I knew her already. I asked her [to marry me]; she said yes" or "I was out herding and as I was going along we talked. Later, talking, we got together [literally we tied ourselves together]; we had children [literally, we met children]. That's how it was."¹⁷

The single exception is the account given to me by Pastor Mamani, who was born in Wila Kjaraka but has lived in the mestizo village of Villa Esquivel since he was three years old, so he is perhaps influenced by more metropolitan discourses of "falling in love."

CANESSA: So how did you meet your wife [who is from up the mountain in Thikata (opposite Wila Kjaraka)]?

MAMANI: We just talked.

CANESSA: So what did you talk about?

MAMANI: Getting to know each other we developed a friendship (*Sp. amistad*).

CANESSA: What did you say to her?

MAMANI: I told her "I love you." [laughter] That was it; then we lived well together. We just lived well together. We never fought.

Flora gives a fuller account of how she came to know her first husband, but it is certainly not a story of romance and love:

My sister was already married here so, as an unmarried girl, I came to help her. That is how they knew me. But I didn't know my husband; without talking we came together. I did not know my husband. One afternoon when I was here with my sister, they all arrived and I asked myself, "Why are all these people here?" My sister said: "We will live here, marry this young man." And then my mother-in-law told me: "We will be here together, and we will not make you suffer. Your sister is here so you will have her for company." And then my sister began to cry: "I am alone here!" So I thought to myself that they would not allow me to suffer here, and I am just alone [in Waychu] taking care of the goats, so many goats. So they hid me; and my father and mother looked for me in vain. Eventually they went to ask my parents [for my hand in marriage], and my father was strongly opposed, and they did not pay any attention to him. After a long time had passed, my father came and forgave me. I did not go to him because I was scared he might beat me, and this is how I got married. Nowadays young men and women talk, but I did not know him and he did not know me. I cried for those days because in the emptiness and darkness we knew each other and he took me away.¹⁸

In the wonderfully detailed autobiography of Sofia Vázquez edited by Hans and Judith-Maria Buechler (1996), Sofia is uncharacteristically terse when she recounts how she met the father of her child. A young man was looking for a room to rent: "I rented him a room across the patio where people store meat now. One year later Rocio was born" (1996: 198). It is thus not surprising that Andean ethnographies have little to say about love and romance, even when focused on courtship and marriage (e.g., Valderrama and Escalante 1998).¹⁹

The one apparent exception is the work of Luis Millones and Mary Pratt (1989). However, despite the title of *El Amor Brujo* (The Bewitching Love), there is very little in the book about love and romance; it is much more about courtship and marriage. They, for example, give wonderfully detailed accounts of how young men will indicate their sexual interest in a woman by stealing an item of clothing and waiting for her interested response in the form of stone throwing or coming to retrieve the item, each indicating a desire for sex (1989: 36). The stories of theft, stone throwing, and sex resonate strongly with what I was told about adolescents in Wila Kjarka,²⁰ where theft and violence (the young girl may indicate her interest in sex by beating the pretender with her herding stick or anything else she may have at hand) are key elements in accounts. The young girl indicates her interest in having sex with the young man through her acts of violence. The suitor may provoke the act of violence by starting the stone throwing, but there is no suggestion that the sex act itself is violent or that the girl is violently taken; she is the principal agent of violence. What men and women in Wila Kjarka do not talk about, nor, apparently, Millones and Pratt's informants, is any emotional or romantic content to the encounter.

Unlike in other parts of the Andes (e.g., Van Vleet 2008) apart from some older folk, people do not generally talk of brides being captured, literally or figuratively. It is the role of the girl's parents to beat the young man for taking away their daughter, but, although the blows may be hard enough, there is no anger behind them.

One important difference between marriage in Wila Kjarka and other parts of the Andes is that almost all marriages are contracted within the community. In a survey I conducted in 1992, of almost all the extant marriages in Wila Kjarka (i.e., where both partners were still living), 83 percent of those marriages were between two Wila Kjarkeños. This number rises to 93 percent if we include the neighboring villages of Thikata and Jankho Kjarka. Older people, many of whom were widowed when the

survey was taken, were much more likely to have been married to someone from beyond their natal village, and it appears that this very strong rate of endogamy is a post-hacienda phenomenon. At any rate, most young women in Wila Kjarka today do not face the prospect of living in a distant community when they marry. The advantage for a young woman in marrying within the community is that, not only does she stay in a familiar place, but her father and brothers can be relied upon to protect her if her husband is seen to be excessively abusive.

Finding a husband or wife appears to be based on pragmatism rather than on affect. Krista Van Vleet in her study of the people of Sullk'ata notes that "most couples would not admit that they felt affection for their partner before marriage. Most Sullk'atas do not say they married because they 'fell in love'" (2008: 141). Van Vleet rightly points out that companionate marriage is a relatively recent phenomenon in Western culture, but "falling in love" most certainly is not. In the European Middle Ages, the bardic and literary genre of Courtly Love is a testament to a highly developed sense of sexual passion and romance, even if not associated with marriage; and, of course, the Psalms and the Songs of Solomon in the Bible point to similar sensibilities for the ancient Hebrews. Love poetry and songs long predate companionate marriage. One can also look at the many examples of erotic love in Asian literature and legend, and the work of Jacques Lizot on the Yanomami of Venezuela (1991) shows that some lowland groups at least talk of love and passion.

I am not saying that people in Wila Kjarka do not love each other or that they do not have amorous passion but, rather, that there is no sense that this is normal or expected or even desired within or without marriage, nor is it apparently spoken about. Although Wila Kjarkeños tell many stories, and some of these are about marriage, none of these is about love or romance; they tend to be about condors taking and marrying young girls rather than about marriage between two humans.

People do talk about sexual attraction, although not directly linked to love, and here, as in so many other cultures, food offers the language for talking about sex. To ask for food, to offer food, and to take it, are the modes through which people seduce each other and are the source of much ribald humor. Young people also throw stones at each other when out herding. Any herder soon learns to be an excellent shot in order to protect the sheep from predators, so the girls are as adept at hitting their suitors in the head as are the boys. What is also absent in any discourse about meeting a partner is kissing. I can honestly say that I have never

seen two Wila Kjarkenos kiss, on the lips or on the cheek, be they a couple, siblings, relatives, or parent and child; nor have I ever heard of anyone kissing either. I cannot, of course, be sure of the fact that they never kiss, but it certainly does not happen in public, or even in front of intimates, nor do people talk about it. I have, however, seen people kiss lambs on many occasions, just not humans. At any rate, this is not a culture where sexuality and affection are publicly expressed, but it is not the case that people are necessarily prudish or place a high value on sexual "virtue."

Despite almost five hundred years of Catholic evangelization, virginity is not valued among the people of Wila Kjarka. Everyone has sex before they get married and often wait until they have several children to formalize their union. There is no sense at all that men desire virgins in particular or that girls are keen to preserve their virginity. Parents are not concerned about their daughters losing their virginity, although they are concerned that they may become pregnant before being in a stable union. The concern of parents and youth alike is not so much about any physical purity, which is such a dominant trope within orthodox Catholicism—in fact, I would say that people have no sense at all of "physical purity"—but rather, the ability to create a family and household in the correct way. After marriage a couple is considered to possess the agency to produce children, run their own household, and take up those communal offices and responsibilities. For Denise Arnold (2006: 129), it is the marriage ceremony that functions as the spiritual birth of the person in Andean indigenous cultures, but perhaps it is more accurate to see the life cycle as a series of births and transformations, and it is only at death that one becomes "truly" social. That is to say, being jaqi is a continual process, a series of becomings without a clear beginning or end.

In the preceding discussion about personhood I have concentrated on those elements that make the people of Wila Kjarka different from those they call q'ara. But this very process of becoming a person also serves to distinguish men from women; and it is not surprising that the process of becoming and being jaqi is similar to the process of becoming and being a man and a woman. If Wila Kjarkenos, when asked how they are different from q'aras, always begin with discussing how jaqi and q'aras live differently, the very same is the case when discussing the difference between men and women. That is to say, the primary mode of difference is what people do, rather than what people are in some kind of absolute and unchanging way; or, to put it another way, what people are as jaqi or gendered people is a result of a series of actions and processes.

I have dealt with how people in Wila Kjarka understand gender in greater depth elsewhere (Canessa 1997). When asked about the difference between men and women in Wila Kjarka I invariably receive in response a list of activities that men and women do, in essence a division of labor. In Wila Kjarka people do not now want (nor have they wanted in the past) to have many children: Many pregnancies affect the health of a woman; people are aware that the land cannot sustain a growing population; and there are no descent groups that depend on having children. As a consequence, what is valued in a woman as a prospective wife or indeed more generally is her capacity to work, take care of animals and children, and manage the household resources. Neither a woman's fertility nor her sexuality is highly elaborated as part of her identity. In a similar way, it is not a man's fertility or sexual potency that is valued by a woman or her family but his laboring power and ability to bring in resources.

Men and women are made; they become so as a result of their productive activities. Gender is therefore iterative in the sense outlined by Judith Butler (1993) and Henrietta Moore (2007). People in Wila Kjarka are a very good illustration of this thesis because they explicitly talk about gender as something that has to be performed through a set of activities: Men plow, chop wood, and knit standing up; women weave, cook, and sow. Some of these are related to much broader ideas of gender, a principle of vertical and horizontal activities which relate to productive relations. Relations between men and women are informed by and equally illustrate a much broader set of relations between older and younger, high and low, from the celestial to the quotidian, as has been noted by many anthropologists of the Andes. Some have suggested that there are multiple genders in the Andes and that there are as many as ten (Rösing 1999), but this appears to me to be a profound misunderstanding of how gender operates. Gender is simultaneously a mode for men and women to be in the world as it is a language for understanding a wide set of relations. Relationships may be gendered, such as those of the upper moiety may be "masculine" with respect to those of the lower moiety; this is not to say, however, that members of different moieties have different genders as suggested by Rösing.

When speaking of gender as performative, especially in a place such as Wila Kjarka where gender relations are relatively egalitarian, one may get the sense that it is somehow elective, that one can decide how, and even which, gender to perform. In practice, as Butler (1990, 1993) is at pains to point out, gender is performed within cultural systems the place strong

restrictions on what is acceptable. So even though it is accepted in Wila Kjarka that men will cook and women will plow, this is only when there is no person of the relevant gender who can do that job.

Even as it is true that people in Wila Kjarka are treated as genderless when they are babies and gender is acquired over time, as part of the process of becoming jaqi, it is also important not to forget that even though genitalia are not seen as the root of gender differentiation they are indeed the signals for assigning a gender to a child. In all human societies children are assigned to a male or female gender on that basis; and even in those societies where there is arguably a third gender, it is one which combines attributes from the other two. Even though children are assigned to a gender on the basis of their penises and vaginas, what this assignment actually means varies enormously between cultures. In Wila Kjarka the process through which one develops a gender through short, strong bodies for men and women is the same as that which produces the difference between jaqi and qara. One of the differences between jaqi and qara is their bodies; gendered bodies as products of nutrition, lifestyle, and activity. It becomes impossible then to separate the process by which one becomes a woman in Wila Kjarka from the process by which one becomes jaqi.

Indigenous Andeans are not very sexually dimorphic: Men have little body hair and typically cannot grow beards; men and women have barrel chests and narrow hips, and they also do not differ considerably as much in musculature as do other populations. Although it is true, for example, that men in Wila Kjarka can, on average, carry heavier loads for longer than can women; it is also true that Wila Kjarka women regularly carry loads across their backs up the mountain that men from the cities would have difficulty lifting. Well-fed teachers have a very uncomfortable time walking from the road to the central school in nearby Choquepata, even with very small backpacks, whereas even people well into their sixties from Wila Kjarka and other communities walk this route with very little difficulty and considerable loads.

As a consequence of being born and growing up in Wila Kjarka, babies become jaqi women and men whose gender and ethnic identities are visible on their bodies: strong arms and legs from working in the fields and walking up mountains; dark skin from being in the sun; lean frames from the physical activity and low fat diet; short stature because of nutritional deficiency; and the many other marks of being a rural peasant. These identities become, quite literally, embodied.

BECOMING OLD

People continue to have children until they are into their forties. For many women, repeated pregnancies means calcium deficiency and loss of teeth as well as the other tolls of breastfeeding and taking care of infants. It is not surprising then that women in their forties look much older than one might suspect. Nevertheless, this is often the most tranquil time in people's lives: They have status within the community, older children can help with tasks, and men typically spend much more time in the community than before. In recent years, however, the demands of schooling, which have been extended from three to six years and beyond, mean that parents can rely less on their children for help and, for the unfortunate, their forties and fifties comes with widowhood.

For women, the most common cause of death is that caused by complications in childbirth, and for men there are a host of illnesses and mining accidents to consider. In the past, and sometimes today, older people could rely on their youngest son to take care of them until they died; but this has now become an exception rather than the rule, as young men leave their community to seek their fortunes. In Wila Kjarka, apparently more often than other neighboring communities, a significant number of young men return sooner and stay longer, and Wila Kjarka enjoys a stable population with many children, whereas many communities are dominated by the very old.

There is, of course, no retirement in Wila Kjarka, and people continue to herd and farm until their bodies give up on them. Every household is expected to contribute to communal labor tasks such as road building or maintaining irrigation ditches, and this includes the single households of the very old. So, for example, in 2006 when the community built a new irrigation channel, every household had to be represented; this included Teodosio, who was in his nineties, as well as many other old people who were still expected to wield a pick and shovel. What is perhaps surprising is that even the very elderly made a positive contribution to the work; that is, they offered much more than simply token effort.

Many people find themselves alone, sometimes tragically. Francisca Condori, one of the oldest women in Wila Kjarka and an absolute monolingual, was someone I visited regularly. I have always enjoyed her sense of humor and smile, but the last decade of her life has been especially hard since the death of her youngest son and husband on the same day.



Young and old, men and women, work together on this new irrigation ditch.

This is how it happened. I had a cow and my son used to herd it along with the sheep. Then one day the cow went high up the mountain and fell. His father told me I should scold him, "He has taken the cow high up the mountain and it has fallen." Then the boy, thinking we were going to scold him, poisoned himself. He came back with the sheep; the cow was not with him, just the calf. The cow often escapes, so I thought it had escaped. He entered the house and started doing something with water as if here were about to wash himself, but he was, in fact, preparing the poison. He took it, and I was left alone. We tried to cure him, but we could do nothing. Then I told his father: "You scolded him, you told me to scold him; that is why he poisoned himself." This is what I said to his father. He said strange words to me as my son lay dead. He said he would be blamed for the death. He had bought Folidol in a bottle to kill the worms that infect the potatoes. He hadn't told me that he had bought this medicine.

He brought it out of his pocket and drank it; he died immediately. People came, but they could not do anything; he died very quickly. And this is how I remain alone. The people criticize me: "You must have scolded him; this is why he killed himself." This is why I cry now. It has been ten years since his death, I cannot forget: I continue to lament his loss; my head spins and I go around directionless. This is why I cry so much.

Francisca's brothers and sisters are all dead or moved away, and although she has sons and daughters in Wila Kjarca, she lives alone with her sheep. "I go with my sheep up into the mountains. I go crying after my sheep." Her children cultivate her fields and bring her some food, but Francisca often goes hungry. She laments that all she has are her sheep: "My parents taught me how to care for sheep since I was a child. If I didn't have my sheep, what would I do? I would cry more." But many times I would visit her, waiting for her to return with her sheep from the mountains, seeing her cold and wet and exhausted and utterly miserable. She remembers the days of her youth when she could carry heavy loads and walk for a whole week to trade foodstuffs in the yungas, sleeping wherever nightfall found them, and then walk a week back. She clearly has fond memories of those days when she could carry a quintal (approximately forty-six kilograms) on her back without any difficulty, and she also remembers the fun they had: "There was a place called the Knotted River (*Chinjawira*) and a lot of water came down that river. Sometimes the young men would grab the young women and would bathe in the river. Holding/grabbed on to each other that is how they bathed (*katuntat*, *katuntat ukham wanusiphiri uman*) and we also cooked on the river bank, sometimes sleeping in caves. . . . We walked through the jungle [literally "the center/inside," *taypi*], we walked through the forest, under and through the trees. That is how we walked. Sometimes it rained very hard and we had nothing to cover ourselves with other than animal skins. . . . Now we have nylon sheets, but not in those days." There is some ambiguity here because *katuña* can mean simply to hold someone or something but also to grab or trap, as in fishing (*chawlla katuña*), but at any rate Francisca is no longer being held or grabbed by anyone: Now she is old and tired, she says, and has no strength and her feet hurt when she walks.

There are many single-person households in Wila Kjarca, all occupied by widows and widowers. In the past, the youngest son would remain in the parents' house until they both died, but now young men almost invariably spend their twenties in military service and trying to earn money.



Awicha Francisca Fuentes

Sometimes, however, an elderly parent may live with her children. This was the case with Remegio Patty's mother. Francisca Fuentes was her name, and she hailed from the community of Chiyakani in which many mistis lived. Her surname, Fuentes, suggests a Spanish forbear, but she appears to have been born, and certainly lived, as a jaqi. I affectionately knew her as *Awicha* (Grandma). Her children and grandchildren, however, showed little affection for her, and she was tolerated at best. In fact, when Remegio rented a small house in Sorata, he sent his mother to live there, giving her just about enough food to survive. Still, whenever I visited her during the Saturday market, she was clearly very hungry as well as lonely. Awicha was old when I knew her and was unable even to herd animals any distance from the village. She was a little senile and prone to lamenting her miserable life, but, unlike many older people, she still spent time looking after herself and making sure her hair was clean and properly braided.

It is not only old women who end up alone but men, too. Teodosio, the shaman, has lived alone for many years and survived both of his wives. One of his granddaughters helps with food sometimes, and he can earn money through curing people. Others such as Marcelino Misme not only suffer the loss of their wives—in his case to tuberculosis—but have the added burden of grandchildren to take care of. He has two young boys



Two houses in Wila Kjaraka. The house on the left shows the thatched roof of the kitchen and two plows on the balcony. The house on the right shows a more modern kitchen with a corrugated iron roof, but with no chimney; the smoke comes out the door rather than through the roof. To the side of this kitchen is an oven for baking bread.

living with him, Nestor and Angel. Angel's parents are both dead, but Nestor's parents live in La Paz, unwilling or unable to take care of him. Of his five children, none lives in Wila Kjaraka, and he has to find the resources to put his grandchildren through school. Marcelino cooks for his grandsons in an older style kitchen—a simple hearth with a thatched roof and exposed on all sides. In winter it can get very cold cooking outside as the fire does not let off much heat. As is the case with so many old people, Marcelino is sad. He is sad as he recounts the loss of his wife and children and the fact that those who survived live far away. He clearly finds bringing up his two grandsons something of a burden, but he shows very little resentment and, for their part, they take care of their grandfather as best they can.

Marcelino and his grandsons are the only Protestants in Wila Kjarka, and he converted in 2004 after a bout of illness. He prayed and was healed, and since then he has been an evangelical. Marcelino looks forward to Judgment Day, when he will fly with wings and not have to work the fields any more. Most Wila Kjarkenos, however, do not believe in Judgment Day, and for them death is a journey to another world where they will become ancestral spirits.

DEATH

Death is both feared and not feared in Wila Kjarka. In the contemporary West there is a profound fear of death and corpses but not of the dead themselves: The odd teen horror flick notwithstanding, most people do not fear the spirits of the dead. In Wila Kjarka it is the exact opposite: People do not have the slightest problem seeing or touching corpses or digging up their remains; in contrast, when someone dies, there is a real and palpable fear of his or her spirit returning in a malicious way. Much of funerary ritual in Wila Kjarka involves ensuring that corpse and spirit together travel to the land of the dead.

Burial is important. When my friend Germán was washed away in a flash flood, there was no question that we would look for him despite his young wife's wails that Germán was not dead and would return alive. As she asserted her determination to go to Achacachi and find a powerful shaman, a *ch'amakani*, who would return him, seven of us followed the river down to find him. At the time, I half-believed Germán's young wife: How could someone so bright and vital die so swiftly crossing a stream? But that had surely been his fate. It took us three days to find Germán's body; the search involved a lot of dangerous climbing up, down, and across embankments and cliffs as we scoured the river. But found him we did, broken and bloated on the rocks. It took us another three days to get him back in a makeshift stretcher. His body had begun to decompose, and liquid poured from every orifice; but no one doubted that he had to be found and returned. By the time we got him home he quite frankly stank, yet no one (apart from me) seemed to be disturbed by the smell, let alone horrified at the decomposing corpse that no one shrouded until we returned to the village. On that occasion, certainly, the hard alcohol was very welcome, and on that night I made my first coffin. I was more upset at this funeral than any other I attended in Wila Kjarka. Germán was an exceptionally intelligent man who was committed to staying in Wila Kjarka,



Carrying the corpse at a trot. The bearers run fast and in circles so that the spirit of the dead may not find its way back.

and I thought then, perhaps foolishly, that if he stayed instead of migrating to the city or the yungas, there was some future for the community. Germán was also a friend. Among other things, he taught me how to knit.

The death of an adult, any adult, is a communal affair in Wila Kjarka. Every (living) adult arrives at the house of the deceased for at least some part of the day and night and usually until dawn. People drink and talk, and cry and laugh. When people first enter the room where the corpse is laid out they may offer a prayer, but otherwise the deceased is generally ignored. On my first funeral in Wila Kjarka I recall sitting on the edge of a bed for many hours in a room dimly lit by candles. It was only after some considerable time, when I leaned back to be more comfortable and found my elbows on something soft and lumpy, that I realized the dearly departed Domitilio Mamani was laid out behind me.

The night is long and by dawn most women and almost all the men are drunk. As the sun rises some men begin to construct the coffin. The coffin is a simple affair—a box with a lid to contain the corpse. But even a simple coffin becomes a challenge when one is very drunk, and mistakes are made. Mistakes are generally not made apparent until the coffin is at the graveside because the coffin is taken to the grave without the corpse, who arrives later, carried on a stretcher.

The corpse is brought out and tied to two long poles, and the community assembles around it. There is more drinking and, as is the custom, men offer their drink (usually cane alcohol) to all the other men assembled and then to the women. In a similar fashion, coca and cigarettes are distributed. Before the corpse one of the family members lays out an *inkuña* (a woven cloth made from llama wool) and spreads out the coca and cigarettes. A blessing is made for the deceased, and then all the men take coca and a cigarette, consuming both in honor.

Coca is most clearly associated with dead spirits. It is the shaman's key tool in communicating with the achachilas and is a basic element in any offering to the dead. The achachilas are also known to like cigarettes. When the rains are hard and prolonged, one sometimes comes across a skull on a wall with a lit cigarette in its jaw. Normally only the most adept shamans communicate with the dead through skulls, but common people use skulls to placate the dead and ask them to ease up on the rains. As well as being the moral guardians of the community, the achachilas are most closely associated with rain.

Once prayers have been said, coca chewed, and cigarettes smoked, two men lift the stretcher on their shoulders and start running to the

cemetery. They run at a swift pace, but not in a straight line, and meander and twist and turn at every possibility. This has two functions: the first is to confuse the spirit were it to try to return to the village along the same route; the second is to allow everyone to catch up. The bearers are known as *jiliri* and *silkka*, older and younger brother, which are also the terms used for a team of oxen as they plow a field. People talk of the carrying of the corpse to the cemetery in the same way as they talk of plowing, and it is for this reason that the coffin goes ahead: In a coffin the corpse cannot be plowed back into the cemetery lands. Men take it in turns to "plow," but with the lack of sleep, the twisting and turning, and the prodigious amount of alcohol it is fairly common for all three, bearers and corpse, to fall and even roll down the mountain side. This is received with neither dismay nor humor, and the corpse is simply retrieved, hoisted up again, and sent on its way. This manner of traveling to the cemetery is another marker of the difference between jaqi and q'ara, as the latter are understood to always travel in a coffin.

The community follows in a long column until all arrive at the cemetery, where the coffin is waiting. The cemetery is small but intentionally so, in the sense that everyone is supposed to be buried close together. When a new grave is being dug, other corpses are inevitably produced. Again, there is no horror or distress as bodies are dug up in varying stages of decay, and people watch and make matter-of-fact comments as they wait for the hole to be completed: "Oh, look, I remember that sweater; that is little Ricardo's, isn't it? Oh yes...!" Bones are set aside and reburied, although skulls may be kept for those rainy season moments when they may be needed for rituals.

As the grave is being dug the corpse is left unattended next to or in the coffin as people continue to drink. As I suggested above, one of the consequences of the inebriate construction of coffins is that they may not turn out exactly as envisaged. In the case of Domitilio, the coffin was too short so when he was laid in his head didn't fit. So the head was pushed down, but then his knees came up. So his knees were pushed down and then his head popped up... This went on for some time until it was decided to lay the lid with three men sitting on it while it was hammered in. But someone had stolen the hammer. It turns out that the owner of the hammer, Gerónimo (Francisca's husband), was annoyed with Domitilio's son for usurping his position in the flute band and had liberated him of his hammer. A chase then followed for the hammer, which, despite being wielded menacingly, was retrieved. But before the coffin lid could be



The entire community follows.

securely attached Geronimo kicked the coffin, sending its occupant rolling down the mountain.

Domitilo was recovered and reoccupied his position in the coffin, which was duly hammered shut with three men sitting on it, and Domitilo was finally laid to rest, but not before placing in the coffin a bottle of water, a bottle of *k'usa* (maize beer), and a sack of food. The sack usually contains potatoes and other tubers, as well as three types of maize: *mucha tunku*, *jampi tunku*, and *chivita*. These are for eating, making roasted maize, and making *k'usa*. Sometimes money is also included, as precious metal, along with food, may be needed by the deceased in the land of the dead. Before the coffin is closed, an arm of the corpse is sometimes exposed and a number of people come to ask favors of the deceased. Some ask the dead to communicate with recently deceased relatives. On one occasion, an infertile woman asked the deceased to assist her in having children.

When the grave had been filled in and the simple wooden cross laid on top, a number of people began to cry and wail their laments. This was followed by more drinking and coca chewing until finally everyone trooped back to the village, where people stayed together until long after nightfall.

The drinking and chewing and smoking that accompany every aspect of the funeral are not incidental or indeed instrumental in the sense that it helps people overcome their grief, although this may be a consequence. Drinking and chewing and smoking are in themselves offerings to the *achachilas* and a way of bringing the *achachilas* closer to people. Thus are united the community, both the living and the dead; and it is this understanding of community, one sustained by the *achachilas* that, for many *Wila Kjarkeños*, makes their community different from mestizo communities.

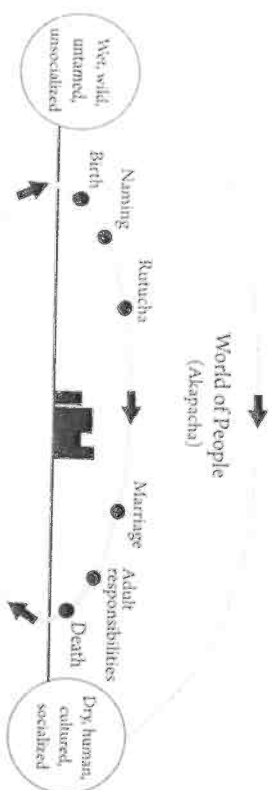
The dead are associated with darkness, but it is the confusing period between day and night, the twilight, which causes people the greatest fear. In the gloaming, the dead may become confused and leave their resting place and bring illness and misfortune with them. Even after night has fallen on the night of a funeral, people make sure to travel home in groups.

This period of anxious liminality continues until the eighth day after the burial, the *uchuria*, when, once again, the adults of the community assemble and drink through the night until the spirit of the dead person is properly secured. But it is not, in fact, for three more years that the spirit of the dead is properly reunited with the *achachilas* or, more accurately, that the spirit of the dead becomes one with the *achachilas*.

TODOS SANTOS

As in much of the Catholic world, the dead are remembered on the Feast of All Saints, or *Todos Santos*. In *Wila Kjaraka*, All Saints, which falls at the end of October, coincides with the coming of the rains, and it is the *achachilas* who bring the rain.

Todos Santos takes place over three days. Adults who have died in the previous three years are remembered in their homes as their families construct altars laden with bread and products from the jungle such as sugar cane, bananas, and flowers. The dead are believed to inhabit a world below, where it is wet and from where the rains come. From *Wila Kjaraka* one can often clearly see the rain come up from the Amazon basin. Typical among the breads that are baked are bread babies, which the dead are particularly fond of eating. As was mentioned previously, newborns are particularly



THE LIFE CYCLE IN POCOBAYA

The cycle in Wila Kjarka.

associated—in fact, intimately linked—with the world of the achachilas, from whence they come, and are characteristically soft and wet.

On the second day of Todos Santos the whole community goes from house to house where they are fed by the family. This is one occasion in Wila Kjarka when people eat to excess with plate after plate of food being thrust upon the guests. Once I learned that I could pass my cold and greasy soup to the children behind me, attending such feasts became less of an ordeal.

On the third day all the altars are dismantled in their homes and reassembled at the cemetery where the entire community arrives. Once again there is an excess of eating, and as people pray for the deceased they are offered the food on the altar until it is all gone. People are understood to be eating for the dead, which is why the food on the altars often comes from the lowlands, where the dead dwell. It is also sometimes the case that the deceased's favorite foods are produced for consumption.

The human life cycle is then a process by which wet fetuses come into the world and are progressively dried out until they become the dry bones of the dead, who, in turn become hydrated, as it were, below the surface of the earth and once again become part of the life-giving, wet world of the dead.

Once all the food has been eaten, a general prayer is said for all the dead and thus ends the celebration. Todos Santos is a process by which individuals are converted into achachilas, and there is a movement from the individual to the collective: On the first day the dead are remembered privately in their homes; on the second day the community comes to the

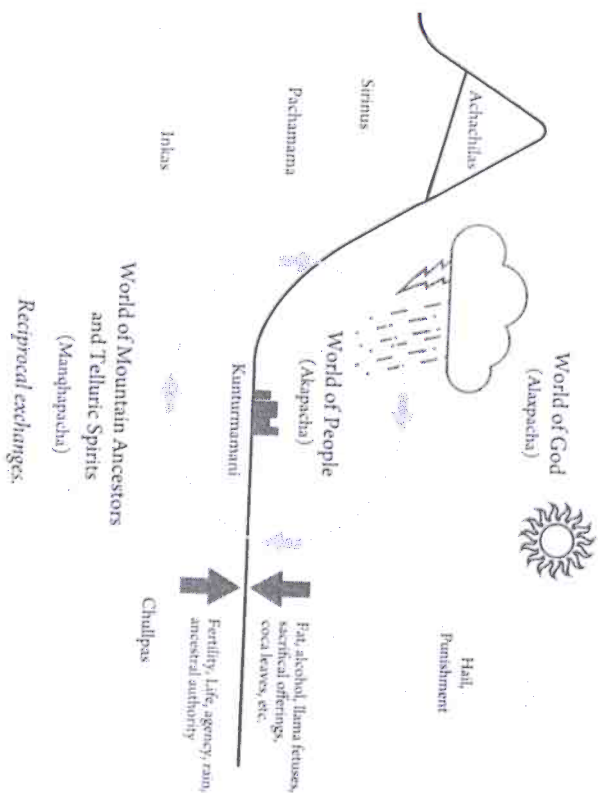


The corpse and the coffin receive little attention as the grave is dug.

home of the deceased; and on the third day the community, dead and alive, assembles at the cemetery. The prayers also follow a similar pattern: first for named individuals, and then for all the dead; and people are only remembered and named as such for three years, after which they are recalled as part of the collective dead.

In Wila Kjarka people do not worship their dead as named ancestors, and very few people can remember beyond their grandparents' names; but they do worship their dead as the collective achachilas. The cemetery of Wila Kjarka is directly in sight of the biggest achachila of all, Illampu. And this points to an apparent contradiction: How can the achachilas be denizens of the manqhapacha below as well as high mountains and rain that falls from the sky? Even the highest mountain peaks are part of the surface of the earth; all that is below that surface is the realm of the achachilas and the other denizens of the manqhapacha such as the chullpas, Inkas, and so on. And as the rain always comes up from the Amazon basin, the rain visibly comes from below Wila Kjarka even if it ultimately falls from above.

Human existence is dependent on the relationship between the worlds of people living on the surface of the earth and the spirits below. From below comes rain, ancestral authority, fertility, and life, in exchange for which people must give fat, alcohol, llama fetus, coca leaves, cigarettes, and other sacrificial offerings.



NATURE AND CULTURE

Wila Kjarkeños' relationship with the mountain spirits raises the question of their closeness to nature. Since Rousseau, people in Europe and its satellite cultures have thought of "primitive peoples" as being closer to nature. In the age of Rousseau this implied a lack of corruption by urban vices, but in the contemporary age the idea of the "noble savage" has transmogrified into the "ecowarrior," fighting to protect nature from the forces of global capitalism.

"Nature" and the "natural" have a long and complex and even contradictory history in European thought: Sometimes nature is to be conquered and possessed, and other times it is to be preserved and even worshipped; there is no shortage of people in the West who seek to have a mystical relationship with "nature." In many cases people are inspired by indigenous people who are understood to have a particular closeness to the natural world. The reverence many indigenous people have for mountains and streams and the earth would appear to resonate very closely with Western ideas of nature to be revered, but there is a profound difference between the relationships Wila Kjarkeños have with mountains and those of a contemporary new-age traveler or a nineteenth-century German romantic.

Whether talking about "natural feelings," "natural fibers," "natural gas," or "natural desires"—as well as "nature" denoting mountains, forests, and

streams—"nature" is understood to be something that is ontologically distinct from human cultural and social processes. The oil executive exploiting natural resources or the ecologist fighting that exploitation share an understanding of nature as that which is beyond human intervention and cultural production. Those who fight against their "natural tendencies" or seek to release them similarly share an understanding that certain feelings and emotions occur independently of what is learned through culture. In both instances "nature" is logically opposed to "culture"; nature is conceived of as a space or set of processes beyond human cultural and social production. These ideas are so central to the way Westerners see the world that it is sometimes difficult to conceive that it could be otherwise (MacCormack and Strathern 1980). It will seem obvious to most if not all readers of this book that if I am walking up a mountain along a solitary path, I am in nature, and that if I am walking down Broadway in New York City, I am not. For people in Wila Kjaraka, and indeed many other people in the world, it is by no means obvious that this is so, and it is difficult for people who are the products of European culture to understand why since the idea of an urban, civilized, cultured existence (at certain times these words have been synonymous) as opposed to a wild, uncivilized, and barbaric existence, goes back at least to the ancient Greeks. Even when the bucolic charms of a rural life are contrasted with the vices of urban life, there is still the clear sense of a division between nature and culture. In Wila Kjaraka no such division exists, whether positively or negatively valued. So, for example, I sometimes like to go for long walks when I am in Wila Kjaraka. Taking some notes to write up or a book to read, I usually walk up the mountain to get better views and to enjoy nature. I breathe the fresh air, take in the scenery, and feel enriched by the experience. Such behavior is bizarre to Wila Kjarkeños, although by now they have become used to such eccentricities on my part. Initially people asked me if I was looking for gold or asked, in a puzzled way, "Do you think there is gold up there?" since it would be quite unlikely to find gold up a mountain like that. Others thought I was looking for buried chullpa treasure; and many others who do not know me and occasion upon me on the path assume that I am a Protestant missionary seeking to save souls for Jesus. To walk up a mountain, for pleasure, makes no sense whatsoever. Nor, incidentally, does my pained expression when people casually throw trash into a stream or just anywhere with no concern for the environment. People in Wila Kjaraka are intimately connected to the mountains and streams and the land that sustains them; they are not, however, in the least bit

close to "nature" since, for them, "nature" and the "natural" is not beyond culture.

In his highly influential work, anthropologist Philippe Descola put forward the idea of a "domestic nature," *La Nature Domestique* being the title of his (1986) book about the Shuar of Ecuador. The English title, *In the Society of Nature* (1994), has a slightly different sense but, either way, Descola's work attempts to break down a false dichotomy between the social lives of people and the environment in which they exist. The Shuar, according to Descola, have social relations with, for example, jaguars and tapirs, and various kinds of vegetation; they are fully integrated into the social lives of people. In some ways, though, it is a shame that he chose to put "Nature" in the title of this wonderful book because I think it misdirects the reader and ultimately undermines his argument that there is no such thing as "nature" for the Shuar. Descola doubtless fell into the problem of translating very different cultural concepts into terms that are intelligible to people who live in a very different culture.

Largely because of Descola's work I have stopped referring to the achachilas and other beings as "nature spirits." The great mountain of Illampu, which rises so majestically behind Wila Kjaraka, is an important part of social life in Wila Kjaraka. The people of Wila Kjaraka make offerings to the mountain god, and Illampu, in turn, brings rain. In a similar way the earth goddess known as the pachamama is a regular part of Wila Kjarakeños' social life, and she is regularly invoked for the fertility of crops and so on. The Inkas, the chullpas, the achachilas, the kunturmananis, and all the other demizens of the manqhapacha are refractions of an encompassing matrix of forces to which humans are intimately related; jaqi have a kinship relation with the mountain, the achachilas, and the Inkas and chullpas too (although these may be conceived as rather more distant relations).

Consequently, when Wila Kjarakeños walk through (and, of course, they never go for "walks") the lands, they have a profound intimacy with every outcrop of rock, every distant peak, every area of flat land, all of which have names—names given to them by the achachilas themselves. As I have suggested above, this intimacy with the animated landscape is one of the aspects of their lives that distinguishes them from q'aras, who have no such relationship with the demizens of the manqhapacha but, rather, are imagined to be exclusively concerned with the deities of the *Allaxpacha*, Jesus and God.

Such a relationship is at the very core of Wila Kjarakeños' sense of personhood; it makes them who they are, and it makes them different from q'aras. But it is important to distinguish between this intimacy with the landscape and a concern for "nature." As we have seen, contemporary indigenous leaders in Bolivia are not immune from the political attractions of espousing an idea of indigenous people as protectors or guardians of natural resources, of being natural ecowarriors; but this sensibility does not come from people like those who live in Wila Kjaraka, who show absolutely no concern for trash being thrown in rivers, the deforestation of the Amazon, or the exploitation of natural gas.

MAKING PERSONS, MARKING DIFFERENCE

Being a person—that is, a jaqi—in Wila Kjaraka is a continuous process of becoming. One may view procreation then as a process by which an unsocialized creature becomes fully human and ultimately reaches the apotheosis of humanity: becoming merged with the ancestral spirits. Herein lies an important aspect of all ritual in Wila Kjaraka: the suppression of individuality and the glorification of the community spirit. In this way, the arbitrary incidence of birth is, over time, domesticated and regulated, and it becomes integrated into the community spirit.

One of the more important aspects of this integration is the establishment of a series of reciprocal relationships. This kind of relationship, paradigmatically an exchange of labor, has been described by many researchers as being one of the fundamental differences between true "people" and others for, unlike jaqi, exchanges with urban dwellers are described as being asymmetrical and often highly exploitative (see Allen 1988: 93; Isbell 1978; Mayer 1975, among others). This kind of relationship is not confined to the human world, for relationships with the spirit world are also so conceived and account for the intimacy of the relationships people of Wila Kjaraka have with these spirits.

Ultimately what defines one as jaqi in Wila Kjaraka is the kind of relationships one has with the collectivity as well as those the community has with the earth spirits, which are often seen as ancestral mountain spirits. As such, identity as jaqi is not something one achieves once and for all through a rite of passage but, rather, something that must constantly be maintained. The people who live in other indigenous communities are recognized as jaqi because they too have these reciprocal relationships

with each other and with the ancestral mountain spirits. As Teodosio explained to me, the difference between jaqi and q'ara is not that the latter do not have achachilas—there are achachilas everywhere—just that the q'ara do not recognize them.

Following Carol Delaney's (1991) insight that ideas surrounding birth are not merely reflective of more generalized ideas of where humans are in the world but are constitutive of such relationships, we can see that ideas held by people from Wila Kjarka surrounding birth are part of a more generalized understanding of how human beings relate to the land, the members of their community, and the world beyond. It is through these relationships that one's status as jaqi is created and maintained. Since it is through relationships that identity is created, one's status is not something that is simply achieved once and for all in the way that, say, birth in Bolivia makes one Bolivian in the eyes of the state. Being jaqi is not what one is but what one does.

It should thus become clearer why migration has such a profound effect on ethnicity (Gose 1994: 64; Harris 1995). If personal identity, as I have described it, is so rooted in place and community and the relations of these to agricultural activity, living in an urban setting without the community, its spirits, streams, fields, and mountains, one's sense of person must inevitably be different. It appears then that "indiamness" is so bound up in a particular lifestyle, both from the emic and etic perspective, that it does not long survive the move to the city. This explains why migrants will go to such pains to maintain fields and attend rituals and fiestas; what is at stake is not merely sentimental links with their places of birth but the very sense of who they are as human beings.

This creates a paradox for those intellectuals who seek an Aymara national identity. They can address the educated and urbanized migrants in terms of flags and nationhood, a language that is clearly European, but these ideas may have very little resonance among those for whom their sense of identity is founded on entirely different precepts, not on nationhood or genealogical descent, but particular practices and relationships and, above all, a different sense of what constitutes jaqi, a person. To put it another way, this is an example of how the boundary that constitutes the jaqi/q'ara distinction and that of indian/nonindian do not neatly coincide. That is, whereas many migrants may be regarded as indians by other urban residents, they may not be regarded as jaqi by their natal kith and kin.

The processual and performative understanding of identity that I have outlined intercalates with the wider national understanding of

ethnicity and race. The boundaries of difference in the highlands denoted by the terms *campesino*, *indígena*, or, more pejoratively, *indio*, generally refer to the same people who think of themselves as jaqi. Nevertheless, how the latter understand the difference and the boundary across which it is drawn is quite different.

Through the analysis I have presented here it is should be clearer why it is that, whereas indians can be seen to occupy a class position in society, they do not identify themselves on a class basis and thus do not constitute a "class in themselves" and why, although race and ethnicity would seem to be the language to use in distinguishing them from the rest of society, they do not see themselves as sharing a common substance or even a common culture. Indians do, however, consistently see themselves as being different from nonindians, but they understand that difference differently; whereas there is something of a consensus as to where this boundary of difference lies, how it is understood may be radically different. Even though indians and jaqis may be the same people, to be jaqi is not the same thing as to be indian.

In the following chapter we take a look at one of the ways jaqi draw the boundary between themselves and others through beliefs in the fasting *kharisiri*. The very real fear that the *kharisiri* provokes illuminates, in a rather dramatic way, how jaqi see themselves as racialized beings.