

# THE LYRICAL CREATION OF COMMUNITY

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## Song as a catalyst of social cohesion in Andean Peru

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### Abstract

This article examines the performative role of waynu, a widespread song-genre in the Andes, in creating an “intersubjective community” among participants. The data-corpus comprises extracts from interviews which I conducted during a year’s period of fieldwork (2011–2012) in Chiquián and Pomabamba, Ancash department, Peru. I couple my analysis of the extracts with congruent concepts in Quechua, the indigenous language, in order to show how indigenous philosophical orientations can provide as robust an analytical framework as concepts in formal scholarship. I conclude by suggesting that the application of an intersubjective analytical framework to the study of verbal art can constitute a productive agenda for future research on indigenous traditions.

### Keywords

Peru, Quechua, verbal art, intersubjectivity, emotional contagion, social cohesion

### Introduction

This article has emerged from research which sought to ascertain the social role of waynu, an Andean song-genre, in two Peruvian towns. The study aimed to reveal the specific contribution

that waynu made to people’s lives; in short, its function for the community. In this article, I shall present one of the main findings that emerged from my research: the role of waynu in fostering social cohesion by merging the boundaries between “individual” and “social”

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identity. There are striking similarities between this attributed social role of waynu and Andean philosophical tendencies that express the fluidity and interdependence of entities (examined below).

A crucial feature of the waynu for the purpose of this article is the fact that the distinction between “performer” and “audience” is frequently blurred. While, in my experience, there was normally one primary singer accompanied by the musicians, it was more common than not for other participants to join in with the singing and dancing. The waynu is not limited to any social category and men and women participate equally in all its dimensions. These features of waynu corroborate the perceptions of the interviewees cited in this article, who stress the waynu’s performative role in fostering intersubjective unity among participants (I shall define intersubjectivity in the section “Theoretical Framework”).

Other studies have revealed a similar intersubjective role for songs in various parts of the world (cf. Lassiter, 1998, for the Plains Indians; Thacker, 2012, for Ireland; and Negus, 2012, cross-culturally). Thus, I do not argue that the waynu is unique in this respect, or that Andean philosophical tendencies are a necessary condition for song-genres acquiring this role. Neither do I claim that the Andean philosophical tendencies are only to be found in that region. Indeed, Jullien’s (1995) study of Chinese philosophy reveals many similar themes regarding the mutual constitution of entities. Neither is it my intention to reify “Andean Philosophy” as a monolithic entity, given that this region is as diverse as it is similar.

That said, the Andean concepts cited throughout this article reveal identifiable philosophical *tendencias* across the region, and my intention in this article is to foreground the striking congruencies between these tendencies and the social role of waynus as expressed by the Andean people I talked with. I thus aim to attain a deeper understanding of people’s perception of waynus, by grounding their expressed

attitudes in the philosophical framework that plausibly influences them. The article has two main contributions. First, and specific to the Andes, this is the first study to centre explicitly on the intersubjective role of Andean songs. Second, and more generally for indigenous scholarship, the study employs local philosophy not just as an object to be studied but as a theoretical framework in its own right. I therefore show how Andean philosophical concepts are just as robust and well founded as other frameworks that derive from the Western scholastic tradition.

### Studies on Andean song

Four monographs have been published on Andean song-lyrics: D’Harcourt & D’Harcourt (1925) examine the music, lyrics and dance of songs which they recorded in their travels across Peru; Husson (1985) analyses the poetry recorded in 17th-century manuscripts; Harrison (1989) explores poetry collected both from archival and ethnographic work from a literary perspective; Arnold & Yapita (1998) expound the relation between songs, textiles and agriculture in a contemporary Andean village. Den Otter (1985) and Stobart (2006) have explored waynu from musicological perspectives, and Baumann (1996) has edited a range of papers also on the musicological aspects of Andean songs. Ferrier (2010) has studied the recent commercialization of waynu in urban settings. A range of articles on Andean song has also been published (cf. Itier, 1992, from a philological perspective; Julca-Guerrero, 2009, from a linguistic perspective; Mannheim, 1986, 1987, 1998, 1999, from a linguistic anthropological perspective). This article presents a fresh contribution to the above studies in its explicit focus on intersubjectivity—the conflation of personal and social identity—and the interdisciplinary method of analysis that is deployed.

## 1 Theoretical framework

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3 In this section, I review the Andean philosophical  
4 concepts that form part of the theoretical  
5 framework for this study. The concepts are in  
6 Central Peruvian Quechua, the native language  
7 of the region. The first concept is “yachay”,  
8 which denotes “wisdom” and “profound knowl-  
9 edge” (Romero, 2003, p. 285, my translation).  
10 The key insight in yachay is its suggestion that  
11 knowledge, gained through engagement with  
12 another entity, results in a change of state for (s)  
13 he who learns: it is a “transformational process  
14 which has to do with achieving a fuller state of  
15 being, in the sense that it is a process through  
16 which persons or states of affairs become ‘other’  
17 than what they were before the process was  
18 undergone” (Howard, 2002, p. 19). Yachay  
19 communicates how knowledge is formed inter-  
20 subjectively, “rather than as ready established,  
21 objectified fact, alienable from the experiential  
22 process in which it takes shape, and there to be  
23 ‘got’ in an instrumental way” (p. 19).

24 The sense that knowledge derives not from  
25 a hierarchical imposition of “observer” over  
26 “observed”, rather through mutual attunement  
27 between the two entities, is also conveyed by  
28 the term “qillqay”. The root meaning is “‘to  
29 make visible’ or ‘to reveal’ a latent image which  
30 has a communicative ... function” (Crickmay,  
31 2002, p. 44). Qillqay can apply to a range of  
32 situations, from alphabetic writing to the “read-  
33 ing” of natural phenomena. It can therefore  
34 be understood also as “indicate” or “make  
35 a sign” (Scharlau & Münzel, 1986, p. 7, my  
36 translation). Qillqay, then, suggests a continu-  
37 ous hermeneutic reading of phenomena, so that  
38 meaning is created through a sense of com-  
39 munion between the individual and his/her  
40 surrounding world.

41 The mutual constitution of entities is also  
42 conveyed by the concept of “tinku”, which  
43 Seligmann (2004) defines as the “convergence  
44 of oppositional forces” (p. 131). Stobart (2006)  
45 notes how “tinku has been widely associated  
46 with the definition and maintenance of balanced

relations, especially the dialectical dualism or  
‘charged diametricality’ of the ayllu [Andean  
community]. ... In this context the word  
tinku emerges as a form of ‘violent harmony’”  
(p. 140). Tinku, then, expresses how difference  
is not a point of radical separation, an impasse  
in communication; rather, it is a potential for  
unity to be formed in strategic ways. Tinku  
dialogues closely with the terms “yantantin”  
and “iskaynintin” in Southern Quechua (closely  
related to the Central Peruvian Quechua spoken  
in Ancash), which “represent what we could call  
imperative forces that ‘urge’ the linkage of things  
considered to have a natural, complementary  
relationship to each other” (Urton, 1997, p. 78).

Together, the above Quechua concepts  
present a highly coherent philosophical ori-  
entation, one which dialogues closely with the  
intersubjective role of waynu as experienced  
by interview-respondents. Yachay conveys  
how the mutual constitution of entities allows  
for their transformation through engagement;  
qillqay communicates how interpretations of  
the physical and social environment are herme-  
neutically “read” through communion between  
Self and Other; tinku expresses the contingency  
of difference, so that “unity” and “difference”  
are not irreconcilable but mutually informing,  
through the complementarity that is implicit in  
the concepts of yanantin and iskaynintin.

The concept that arguably expresses the  
above philosophical tendencies most ade-  
quately in English is “intersubjectivity”. This  
term has many usages, summarized by Gillespie  
& Cornish (2009, p. 19): “shared definition of  
an object” (Mori & Hayashi, 2006); “mutual  
awareness of agreement or disagreement and  
even the realisation of such understanding or  
misunderstanding” (Laing, Phillipson, & Lee,  
1966); “the attribution of intentionality, feel-  
ings and beliefs to others” (Gärdenfors, 2008);  
“implicit and often automatic behavioural ori-  
entations towards others” (Merleau-Ponty,  
1945); “the partially shared and largely taken-  
for-granted background which interlocutors  
assume” (Jovchelovitch, 2007).

Given that my analysis centres on the formation of social unity through the lyrical stimulation of shared memories and experiences, all of the above definitions are compatible with my usage of “intersubjectivity” in this article. (By “shared memories and experiences”, I mean any kind of experience that has posterior relevance for more than one person and can thereby bring people together in the act of sharing. While the extracts in this article centre mostly on romance, they do not prescribe legitimate versus illegitimate topics; what seems to be important for the interviewees is the waynu’s ability to transmit memories, attitudes and sentiments to other people and thereby foster a sense of intersubjective communion). All of the above definitions are, moreover, highly congruent with the Quechua concepts foregrounded above. I therefore define “intersubjectivity” broadly, as “emotional and cognitive approximation between agents”, which is consistent with the definitions that Gillespie & Cornish group together.

In view of the above discussion, I take Self and Other to be mutually constitutive loci of experience and action. This dialogues closely with Merleau-Ponty’s (1964) notion of “flesh”, whereby the difference between agents is not a point of radical separation, rather a reversibility whereby Self comes to be aware of itself only through contact with the Other. The “gap” between entities is thus to be understood as a locus of communication, where, through interaction, the two entities continuously find novel ways of perceiving the world (p. 195). Relationality is not, then, reducible to the outer “shell” of Self but is also constitutive of the very core.

Oring (1994) makes a similar point when he states that social identity is the result of the combination of personal identities, and personal identity can only take form through social identity (p. 212). The predication of the “individual” on the “social”—and vice versa—is indicated by several of the extracts that we shall examine, and is considered by Estermann

(1998) to be a fundamental attribute of Andean ways of thinking: “For Andean philosophy, the individual as such is not so much ‘nothing’ (a ‘non-entity’), rather is something that is completely lost if it is not located within a network of multiple relations” (pp. 97–98, my translation).

### Interdisciplinary analysis

In view of the holistic nature of the aforementioned Andean philosophical tendencies and of the concept of intersubjectivity, it is most productive for this article to engage in an interdisciplinary mode of analysis. Thus, my analysis shall draw on linguistics (for the textual discussion of the extracts), anthropology (for the culturally informed study) and psychology (for the discussion of how the specific Andean concepts dialogue with current debates on intersubjectivity).

This inclusion of non-culturally specific material does not make the paper any less “Andean”. What it does do is to suggest that indigenous concepts may have universal validity, and can be just as perceptive as the theoretical frameworks that have evolved through scientific endeavour. Thus, my paper is not so much a study “on” Andean expressions as an elucidation of how these expressions can feed back into theoretical and methodological frameworks. This is part of an effort to place academic discourse on an equal footing, by replacing the hierarchy of “student” and “studied” with a dialogue among equals.

### Setting and methodology

The study was conducted in Chiquián and Pomabamba, two towns in Ancash department, Peru, between 2010 and 2011. I selected the towns because of their similar populations (each around 4,500), yet different sociological situations. Pomabamba is relatively isolated, being

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1 located 9 hours' bus ride from the departmental  
 2 capital, Huaraz, along an unpaved road. While  
 3 the whole department is experiencing language-  
 4 shift from Quechua to Spanish, a substantial  
 5 proportion of residents in Pomabamba still  
 6 speak Quechua. Chiquián, on the other hand,  
 7 is only 2.5 hours from Huaraz via the main  
 8 paved road between Huaraz and Lima, the  
 9 nation's capital. The process of language-shift  
 10 was significantly more advanced in Chiquián.  
 11 Whereas, in Pomabamba, it was not rare to  
 12 find young people (and even children) who  
 13 were conversant in Quechua, most Quechua  
 14 speakers in Chiquián were above the age of 40  
 15 (unless they had migrated from the surround-  
 16 ing rural areas where Quechua is still relatively  
 17 vigorous). On average, women were more likely  
 18 to speak Quechua than men, perhaps reflecting  
 19 the fact that men generally assumed the role of  
 20 acting as representatives for the family, Spanish  
 21 being the more "prestigious", official language.

22 Another reason for selecting each town is  
 23 the fact that they have different waynu tra-  
 24 ditions: the chuscada in Chiquián and the  
 25 chimaychi in Pomabamba. I explain the dif-  
 26 ferences between these two genres under the  
 27 heading "The Waynu". I expected all of these  
 28 differences between the towns to result in very  
 29 different interpretations of the social role of  
 30 waynu. I was surprised, however, by the extent  
 31 to which the same themes resurfaced, one of  
 32 the most common being the genre's role of  
 33 fostering intersubjective communion, the topic  
 34 of this article. The responses were largely in  
 35 Spanish, and, whilst there was a tendency to  
 36 view Quechua as more appropriate for convey-  
 37 ing affective themes (arguably because of the  
 38 more informal context in which this language  
 39 is used), this was only a general preference and  
 40 there was no suggestion that waynus in Spanish  
 41 are incapable of this role. Indeed, the strong  
 42 correspondences between the views expressed  
 43 in Spanish and the Quechua philosophical  
 44 concepts suggest that elements of indigenous  
 45 Andean culture have survived the process of  
 46 language-shift.

I conducted 60 interviews on the personal  
 and social role of waynu; 30 in each town. I  
 identified the main occupations (school pupil,  
 teacher, authority, commercialist, farm-worker)  
 and conducted five interviews for each category  
 in order to cover a wide cross-section of society.  
 In addition, I identified "singer/composer" as a  
 separate category given the topic of my study.  
 Where applicable, I ensured that each group  
 represented diversity of age and gender. The  
 interviews can be classed as "semi-structured"  
 according to Russell Bernard's typology (2002,  
 p. 205). I first asked the interviewees whether  
 they enjoyed waynu/chimaychi, which almost  
 always elicited a positive response (only two  
 interviewees, both school-pupils, told me that  
 they did not enjoy waynu, preferring Western  
 music instead). Then I asked them to describe  
 the essential features of the genre, its impor-  
 tance for them personally and its wider social  
 role. By "essential features", most people  
 described the Andean origin of the genre, its  
 formal characteristics (verses plus fugue), its  
 instrumentation and—the focus of the present  
 article—its function in forging unity through  
 shared experiences.

I aimed to keep the questions relatively  
 broad and open so that interviewees did not  
 feel constrained in their responses, particularly  
 in view of the subjective nature of the issue.  
 The interviews were therefore more akin to  
 informal discussions than question-and-answer  
 sessions. Having learned fluent Quechua during  
 fieldwork, I was able to conduct the interviews  
 in both languages. Unless I knew that my inter-  
 locutor was monolingual in Spanish, I would  
 ask each question in both languages. In order  
 to eliminate bias, I varied the order of the lan-  
 guages: sometimes I would ask first in Quechua,  
 sometimes in Spanish. I thus left it up to the  
 interviewee which language to use in response.

This gave illuminating sociolinguistic infor-  
 mation: the preferred language, in practice,  
 was overwhelmingly Spanish, despite people's  
 expressed attachment to "Quechua" as an  
 "idea". It may be that the relatively "formal"

context of the interviews meant that people were reluctant to use the less “prestigious” language (Quechua) as opposed to the more “official” language (Spanish). Despite my best efforts to conduct the interviews in the manner of a discussion, the fact that they were recorded perhaps contributed to the perceived formality of the occasion. Interviews comprised between one and seven respondents, depending on the context (it was easier to group school-pupils together while shop-owners were generally by themselves or with one or two other people).

### The waynu

I recorded a total of 27 song-genres during fieldwork, of which waynu is one. Many of these genres are an integral part of particular festivals. The waynu (or huayno in Spanish) is the most widespread genre by far, and is not restricted to any specific occasion, although it is most commonly sung during special events (festivals, birthdays, political anniversaries etc.). Many of the primarily agricultural celebrations have their own “core” songs, sung by one individual (usually the “capitana”, a female singer). While these songs convey ritualistic themes, the waynu is more recreational, offering “snapshots” of personal experience that may or may not bear a relation to the event in which it is sung. Waynu is often spontaneous, and can occupy the space “between” major parts of a ritual, or be sung entirely independently.

The fact that waynus were not restricted to any social group and rarely involved a strict separation between “performer” and “audience” meant that, in contrast to the ritual genres (enacted on limited occasions by “specialist” singers), everyone in the two towns was to some extent familiar with waynu. Thus, waynu was by far the most suitable genre to choose for a large-scale study involving a wide cross-section of the community. Waynus “generally consist of two or three stanzas followed by a faster fuga [fugue]. The stanzas and the fuga

are often repeated and have four lines of six to ten syllables. ... Two lines form a couplet, and two couplets form a stanza” (den Otter, 1985, p. 133). The fuga does not necessarily relate semantically to the rest of the song, and the same fuga is often used for different waynus (p. 151).

The waynu has experienced a degree of transformation, reflecting the wider changes in Andean society. Older songs, and those from remoter communities, are primarily in Quechua and allude to pre-Hispanic beliefs (such as divination through coca or tobacco), while more modern songs, and those from more urban areas, display increased amounts of Spanish, and have largely lost such pre-Hispanic cultural references. Waynu composers range from inhabitants of remote settlements, who mainly sing in Quechua, to national superstars such as Sonia Morales and Dina Páucar, who sing exclusively in Spanish. While Spanish overwhelmingly predominated in interviews, the waynus I collected were most frequently a mixture of Spanish and Quechua. Codeswitching could occur within the same line, between lines, or between verses (cf. Julca-Guerrero, 2009).

There are various sub-genres of waynu, defined primarily by place of origin and musical and dance features. The waynu of Chiquián is termed chuscada, and is relatively fast-paced. Chuscada is played with the violin, harp and guitar or charango, a smaller instrument derived from the guitar. Pomabamba hosts the chimaychi (“chimayche” in Spanish), a slower dance with different choreographic features to other waynus. The instruments of chimaychi are violin, harp and flute. Pomabambinos identify with chimaychi before waynu, given the particular choreographic features of chimaychi, whereas Chiquianos generally talk of waynu as a whole, the term chuscada being more of a technical term for musicians.

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## 1 Presentation of the data

2  
3 While several themes emerged from the inter-  
4 views (notably, the Andean origin of the genre,  
5 the relative authenticity of Quechua/Spanish  
6 lyrics and changes in waynu across history),  
7 one of the most predominant was the extent  
8 to which waynu/chimaychi was felt to enact  
9 a sense of communal cohesion, conflating the  
10 boundaries between Self and Other through  
11 the stimulation of shared memories and expe-  
12 riences. Since constraints on space allow for  
13 the detailed examination of only one theme,  
14 this intersubjective role of waynu is the focus  
15 of the present article. While interviewees com-  
16 monly stressed the Andean origins of the genre,  
17 there were no indications that the intersubjec-  
18 tive role of waynu was limited to any specific  
19 group. Indeed, the extracts in this article suggest  
20 an elimination of boundaries between people,  
21 where the only criterion of engaging in waynu is  
22 the ability to be receptive to other human beings.

23 In order to draw out this theme in the  
24 interview-data, I engage in detailed textual  
25 analysis of some extracts that most clearly  
26 illustrate it. The main parameters in which the  
27 theme of intersubjective communion is illus-  
28 trated are: romance, communion with nature,  
29 and conflation of past and present selves in the  
30 act of memory (these themes often overlap).  
31 Following the extract is a loose translation into  
32 English. While a large number of interviewees  
33 expressed the same theme, I have had to be selec-  
34 tive for the purpose of this article. The extracts  
35 are selected according to two criteria: the extent  
36 to which they foreground different dimensions  
37 of intersubjectivity, and their variety in terms  
38 of age, gender and occupation of the speaker.

39 Regarding the first criterion, some extracts  
40 foregrounded the “internal” dimensions of  
41 intersubjectivity whereas others conveyed its  
42 “external”, more social, shades. All, however,  
43 conveyed the impossibility of clearly separating  
44 the “individual” from the “social”, given that  
45 even the most personal experiences resulted  
46 from a form of engagement, and the “message”

of the waynu resonated more with people when  
it was felt to emanate from a deep personal  
disposition. This differential foregrounding  
has informed the three headings under which  
I group the extracts: conversion of experience  
into a subjective disposition; projection and  
reception of the message through congruence of  
dispositions; resultant social unity. These three  
headings are not intended as rigid categories,  
rather as a way of bringing out the different  
dimensions of the intersubjective process in  
order to reveal its holistic nature.

On the second criterion, I have included  
extracts that represent all of the social catego-  
ries I identified in each town, in terms of age,  
gender and occupation. Thus, it is clear that  
the same theme of intersubjective commun-  
ion through waynu is not limited to just one  
social group. Maintaining variety in all of these  
domains has meant that it was not possible  
to balance extracts equally between Chiquián  
and Pomabamba. The extracts are introduced  
by a quote from Chiquián, followed by four  
from Pomabamba. It will become clear that  
the first quote—representative of tendencies  
in Chiquián—anticipates the following quotes  
that are equally representative of Pomabamba.  
I have placed biographical information after  
each translation, namely year of birth, gender,  
occupation and place of birth, in that order.  
The theme of intersubjective communion was  
widespread across all genders, occupations and  
ages; thus, I have avoided ordering the extracts  
according to *a priori* social “categories”, to  
allow the extracts to “speak for themselves”  
rather than as representatives of decontextual-  
ized analytical groupings.

## The extracts

### *Conversion of experience into a subjective disposition*

The first extract communicates how past forms  
of engagement result in the formation of a

personal disposition, which is in turn exteriorized through the waynu:

Eso es el vivir de cada persona. Supongamos que tú has tenido un tropiezo con una chica, te ha pagado mal, o te ha pagado bien. Entonces de acuerdo a eso tú ya compones la música, el huayno, recordando esos momentos, recordándote de ella, o que hayas vivido otras clase de vidas más diferentes a eso, ¿no?, por decir que hayas tenido, pues, cualquier problema, lo que sea, y recordándote de eso, dedicado a ese problema, dedicado a eso, se compone, pues, el huayno.

[It's each person's lived experience. Let's suppose you've had a slip-up with a girl, she's responded to your affection badly, or she's responded well. So, in line with this, you compose the music, the waynu, remembering those moments, remembering her, or perhaps you've had different experiences, let's say you've had any kind of problem, whatever it is, remembering this, dedicated to this problem, dedicated to this, you compose a waynu.] (1965, male, waynu-artist, Chiquián, personal communication, 15 November 2010)

This speaker defines the waynu as “el vivir de cada persona” (each person's lived experience). The speaker's definition of the waynu in such terms indicates the genre's role in communicating highly personal sentiments. The example of romance is given, whereby people compose waynu “recordando esos momentos” (through remembering those moments), suggesting the nature of the song as a form of private reflection. The adjective “dedicado” (dedicated) likewise conveys the inextricable link between the song's *raison d'être* and the personal experience of the individual. This personal experience is, however, inextricably social: it is only through engagement with the “chica” (girl) that the experience has arisen, and the personal reflection that ensues takes the form of poetic expression through the waynu.

As this quote illustrates, a highly salient theme of waynus is that of romance, often, but not always, unfulfilled. This is reflected in the following extract of a Quechua waynu from Chuyas (Pomabamba): “Hanka chakillan siete sabio / Tsaypa laadunchaw / Rima rima wayta / Eso señapis mala señapis / Ay mananash tinkushuntsu” (Siete sabio of the mountain-foot / By its side / Flower of rima rima / This sign is a bad sign / Oh, we will never meet again). The depiction of two Andean plants, siete sabio (*Mutisia hastata*) and rima rima (*Krapfia weberauerii*), as ill omens illustrates the common attribution of supernatural signs to elements of nature in indigenous Andean culture. The plants constitute a “bad sign” because it is rare to find them together; thus, the indication is that there is some disturbance in the natural order and that, consequently, the lovers' destiny may be thwarted.

This conflation of natural and romantic themes recalls the Quechua term “qillqay”, which was defined in terms of bringing to the fore latent patterns through engagement with the environment. In this view, nature is not an inert entity on which meaning must be imposed; rather, it is an active agent which reveals personal messages to those who are able to interpret its signs. By way of this interpretative process, the individual is able to make better sense of his/her own situation. Thus, while the waynu text conveys personal experience, it also conveys the fact that this experience has not arisen from a vacuum, but emerges through the individual's intersubjective engagement with their environment, whereby that environment, to be meaningful, comes to form part of the Self.

### Projection and reception of the message through congruence of dispositions

While the first quote stresses the intersubjective formation of personal dispositions, the following quote focuses on how these dispositions are in turn projected towards other people through the waynu:



1 El chimayche antiguo es una situación que se  
 2 cantaba con el sentimiento, con el corazón en  
 3 la mano ... era un intercambio de sentimientos  
 4 entre el varón y la mujer ... realmente el hom-  
 5 bre transmitía su sentimiento de igual mujer,  
 6 entonces eso es la expresión autóctona de lo  
 7 que es el chimayche.

8  
 9 [The old chimaychi is something which was  
 10 sung with feeling, with one's heart on one's  
 11 sleeve ... it was an exchange of feelings between  
 12 the man and the woman. ... the man really  
 13 transmitted his feeling, the woman likewise,  
 14 so this is the native expression of the chimay-  
 15 chi.] (1954, male, shop-owner, Pomabamba,  
 16 personal communication, 20 August 2011)

17  
 18 In this quote, the subjective disposition is  
 19 projected towards a receptive interlocutor, as  
 20 conveyed by the phrase “corazón en la mano”  
 21 (heart on one's sleeve, literally “heart in one's  
 22 hand”). The merging of Self and Other is ren-  
 23 dered explicit in the definition of chimaychi as  
 24 “un intercambio de sentimientos” (an exchange  
 25 of feelings). The phrase “transmitía su sen-  
 26 timiento” (transmitted their feelings) suggests  
 27 an almost physical sense of approximation,  
 28 a tangible emotive link between the diverse  
 29 agents. This recalls Merleau-Ponty's (1964)  
 30 notion of “flesh” whereby the boundaries  
 31 between Self and Other are necessarily porous.  
 32 Skar (1994) has likewise discussed what she  
 33 describes as the “law of contagion” in Andean  
 34 philosophy: “Contact with foreign persons  
 35 and objects implies a transfer of quality, with  
 36 a contagious effect on personal characteristics.  
 37 ... Ultimately contagion calls into question the  
 38 unassailability of contiguity and allows for  
 39 transformations in meaning” (p. 261). Insofar  
 40 as it facilitates such transformations, the chi-  
 41 maychi plays a performative role in shaping  
 42 people's identities through intersubjective  
 43 communion.

44 As the interview-extracts have illustrated,  
 45 the “contagion” that is facilitated by waynu has  
 46 a significant emotional dimension. This is highly

congruent with the concept of “emotional con-  
 tagion” in cognitive science, whereby

People tend: (a) to automatically mimic the  
 facial expressions, vocal expressions, postures,  
 and instrumental behaviors of those around  
 them, and thereby (b) to feel a pale reflection  
 of others' emotions as a consequence of such  
 feedback. The result is that people tend (c)  
 to catch one another's emotions. (Hatfield,  
 Rapson, & Le, 2009, p. 26)

Moreover, ethological studies have indicated  
 that “imitation of emotional expression con-  
 stitutes a phylogenetically ancient and basic  
 form of intraspecies communication” (Hatfield  
 et al., 2009, p. 25). This all suggests that these  
 interviewees, through their elucidation of the  
 personal and social significance of an Andean  
 song-genre, are in fact tapping into deep bio-  
 logical truths concerning the social formation  
 of individual predispositions. The following  
 quote renders the personal appropriation of an  
 “external” message even more explicit:

Es que expresan sus sentimientos, pues,  
 ¿no?, por ejemplo, es de, una señorita no ha  
 aceptado, por decir, a un jóven, entonces el  
 jóven compone una canción a esa tristeza,  
 pero como es parte de la realidad, la gente lo  
 acepta con alegría, ¿no?, dice “a mí también  
 me ha pasado”, le hace suya, y así, ¿no?, todo,  
 o puede expresar su tristeza o su alegría.

[It's that they express their feelings, for exam-  
 ple, a girl hasn't accepted, let's say, a young  
 man, so the young man composes a song for  
 his sadness, but since it's part of reality, people  
 accept it with happiness, they say “the same  
 happened to me”, they make it their own,  
 they can express their sadness or happiness.]  
 (1966, female, teacher, Pomabamba, personal  
 communication, 10 May 2011)

This speaker conveys the mixture of sadness  
 and joy that is often implicit in waynu: whilst

the message might be sad, “la gente lo acepta con alegría” (people accept it with happiness) because it is “parte de la realidad” (part of reality). It is clear that the pleasure derives from the experience of shared understanding and solidarity that the chimaychi affords, insofar as people say “a mí también me ha pasado” (the same happened to me), with the result that “le hace suya” (they make it [the song] their own). Thus, the voice of the Other becomes the voice of the Self, through the sharing of similar memories. The song can thereby “expresar su tristeza o su alegría” (express their own sadness or happiness). Rather than the “individual” and the “social” being contradictory, therefore, or separate planes of engagement, one can see that, for these speakers, the more personal the message, the greater the possibility for communal engagement. Once again, we are reminded of Merleau-Ponty’s (1964) notion of “flesh”, whereby sociality pervades the core of any entity, and “emotional contagion” (Hatfield et al., 2009), which reflects an in-built capacity for empathetic engagement.

The interactive basis of personal development is likewise conveyed by the Quechua term “yachay”. In the conceptual review, we saw how yachay indexes both “knowledge” and “wisdom”; what was crucial to yachay, however, was the way in which knowledge is arrived at intersubjectively, through a process of mutual transformation in the act of engagement. Stobart (2002) traces this meaning to the word’s etymology: “ya-” denotes the process of “taking on form, becoming something”, while “-cha-” denotes “acting upon something (or someone) else” (p. 81). Thus, the etymology of yachay perfectly conveys the mutual attunement of predispositions in the moment of congruence. According to the interview-extracts, it would seem that waynu is a major catalyst of this transformative process. In the next quote, we shall see how this transformative (and performative) capacity of waynu is felt to result in greater social unity:

### **Resultant social unity**

Ahorita, con el chimaychi, se identifican todos, se identifican todos. En el chimaychi las composiciones en quechua son algo más jocosos, algo más reales de las vivencias que tiene la gente, ¿no? Por ejemplo yo hice una composición. Dice, es de, “¿imaraq kay kuyanakuy?” .... En quechua le he puesto “shonqutapis kushitsinmi / umatapis pierditsinmi”, y, en algunas vivencias dice, en el siguiente verso nomás, “ollqutapis y warmitapis gustarinmi / naani hananchaw y naani chakinchaw kuyanakuy”, esos son versos reales y ha gustado mucho a la gente estos versos que compuse, todavía, entonces cuando yo canto, la gente de, por ejemplo, del campo, “esto me hace recordar yo, cuando era joven, con mi señora pues me metía debajo del camino y en el bosquecito ahí estábamos queriéndonos”.

[Now, everyone identifies with the chimaychi, everyone identifies. In the chimaychi, the Quechua compositions are rather more humorous, rather more true to the experiences which people have. For example, I made a composition. It says “what is this mutual love?” [Quechua] .... In Quechua I put “it makes the heart happy / it makes us lose our head”, and, in line with certain experiences, in the following verse, “boy and girl both like it / this mutual love above the path and below the path”, those are real verses and people have really liked those verses which I composed, still, so when I sing, people from, for example, the country, “this makes me remember when I was young, with my wife I hid myself under the path and in the wood there we were, making love to each other”.] (1972, male, chimaychi-artist, Pomabamba, personal communication, 15 July 2011)

This speaker, a renowned singer/composer of chimaychi, states that “se identifican todos” (everyone identifies) with chimaychi, suggesting

1 that the genre serves to create a sense of commu-  
 2 nal unity. The speaker argues that *chimaychis* in  
 3 Quechua are “*más jocosos*” (more humorous)  
 4 and “*más reales*” (more real) than their Spanish  
 5 counterparts, a perception that was common  
 6 in both provinces; Gálvez (2006) also notes  
 7 how, in Huancavelica, “Quechua is considered  
 8 an eminently expressive language, particularly  
 9 suitable for the manifestation of emotional  
 10 states and feelings” (p. 94, my translation). This  
 11 may be because of the different sociolinguistic  
 12 roles of Spanish and Quechua: Spanish is the  
 13 more “official” language and is deployed in  
 14 both formal and informal situations, whereas  
 15 Quechua has a largely affective role, being  
 16 used primarily between friends and family.  
 17 Nonetheless, this speaker does not suggest that  
 18 *waynus* in Spanish fail to fulfil this intersubjec-  
 19 tive role; only that, on average, Quechua is  
 20 more effective in doing so.

21 The speaker cites a song which he composed  
 22 as an expression of his love for his wife, and  
 23 how this song was appreciated by a large num-  
 24 ber of people given their similar experiences:  
 25 the composer cites people who told him that  
 26 “*esto me hace recordar yo, cuando era jóven*”  
 27 (this makes me remember when I was young).  
 28 Thus, the conveyance, through *chimaychi*, of  
 29 personal memories stimulates other people’s  
 30 memories and results in the formation of an  
 31 intersubjective community. Along with the con-  
 32 gruence between the experience of the author/  
 33 singer and that of the audience, then, is another  
 34 form of congruence: that between present and  
 35 past Self. By expressing memory in the present  
 36 day, the *waynu* serves a performative role in  
 37 merging past and present Selves, both for the  
 38 singer/composer and for the audience; this, in  
 39 turn, results in the merging of minds between  
 40 participants who engage in the same trans-  
 41 formative process. Thus, we see how different  
 42 dimensions of intersubjectivity interact in the  
 43 mutual constitution of individual dispositions.  
 44 Just as there is no radical separation between  
 45 individuals, so the individual is not a single,  
 46 monolithic entity, and it is this ever-evolving,

unfinished nature of Self that allows for emo-  
 tional and cognitive contagion.

This fact is expressed by the Quechua con-  
 cept of *tinku*, which is most simply translated  
 as “convergence”, but which, at a deeper level  
 expresses the emergence of entities through a  
 prior state of interaction. What is crucial to  
*tinku* is the fact that individual identities do not  
 disappear in the act of engagement; instead, it  
 is the difference between entities that allows for  
 meaning to be negotiated, leading to a transfor-  
 mation of these identities and a form of unity  
 that is compatible with individual predisposi-  
 tions. Indeed, in the interview-extracts, what  
 is meaningful is not just the unity that results  
 from shared experiences, but the very process  
 of attaining unity in the first place. Meaning  
 and significance can only arise if a progression  
 is involved, and this progression always entails  
 a degree of renegotiation, a shift in stance, even  
 if the potential for arriving at that stance has  
 always been latent. Likewise, Oring (1994)  
 notes how personal and social identity do not  
 negate each other, but are two sides of the same  
 coin, since the “personal” takes shape through  
 constant interaction, and the “social” results  
 from the congruence of individual dispositions.

*Tinku* is also expressed in the song that this  
 speaker quotes, with the foregrounding of com-  
 plementary oppositions. In the first couplet,  
*shonqu* (heart) is contrasted with *uma* (head),  
 which are respectively associated with *kushi*-  
 (enjoy) and *pierdi*- (lose). In the second couplet,  
*ollqu* (male) and *warmi* (female) are juxtaposed,  
 followed by juxtaposition between *hananchaw*  
 (above) and *chakinchaw* (below) (literally “at  
 the foot of”), in reference to the *naani* (path,  
 road). In the closely related Southern Quechua  
 language, this complementarity is also described  
 as “*yanantin*” and “*iskaynintin*”, terms which  
 convey the sense of inalienable partnership  
 between opposite members of a pair (Urton,  
 1997, p. 78). Thus, in the philosophical ten-  
 dencies widespread across the Andes, entities  
 are not self-sufficient but constantly open and  
 interactive. This insight results in a potent

theoretical framework for understanding the intersubjective role of waynu. The final quote summarizes the main stages of the intersubjective process, from the relational formation of individual dispositions to the social unity that ensues from the expression of these dispositions in waynu:

Bien, para escribir el chimaychi, creo pues a veces hay una esquila de ver algo y sentir, percibir, ¿no? Entonces esa percepción o ese sentimiento de repente convertirlo en chimaychi, convertirlo en música, en huayno, significa que tiene un formato esencial, ¿no?, que tenga un mensaje más que nada. ¿Mensaje de qué? Mensaje de alegría, mensaje de tristeza, mensaje que confunda a la gente, ¿no?, que realmente llegue pues al corazón, porque la música cuando realmente escuchas llega, pues, hasta el alma, no, por las venas corre, y esto pues emotiva que uno escriba temas que realmente gusten y ha gustado a mucha gente los temas que hemos hecho.

[Well, to write the chimaychi, I think that sometimes there's a blueprint of seeing something and feeling, perceiving. So when this perception or feeling is sometimes converted into chimaychi, into music, into waynu, it means that it has an essential format, that it has a message, above all. What kind of message? A message of happiness, a message of sadness, a message which blends people together, which really gets to a person's heart, because the music, when you really listen, gets to the very soul, it runs through the veins, and this inspires people to write themes which many people really like, and many people have liked the themes which we've composed.] (1978, male, chimaychi-artist, Pomabamba, personal communication, 23 May 2011)

Here, a composer of waynu succinctly describes the role of this genre for himself and his community. This is a good quote to conclude with, because it depicts the full circle from: 1) the

initial (intersubjective) experience; to 2) an ensuing internal predisposition; to 3) the conversion of this internal predisposition into a “message” for others; to 4) the realization of this message as stimulating another internal disposition in other people; to 5) the resultant social unity, insofar as what is shared at a deep internal level is also what facilitates social bonding. In this quote, 1) and 2) are evidenced by the alleged origin of the chimaychi, which lies in the composer's ability to “ver algo y sentir, percibir” (see something and feel, perceive it); 3) is elucidated when he describes the chimaychi as resulting from a process of “convertir” (converting) these stances into a “mensaje” (message), which is 4) internalized insofar as it forms a predisposition in the corazón (heart), alma (soul) and venas (veins) of other people; and 5) “confunda a la gente” (blends people together), thereby enacting unity based on empathetic engagement (recalling the concept of “emotional contagion” from Hatfield et al., 2009).

The phrase “por las venas corre” (it runs through the veins) shows that the message circulates not only *between* people, but also *inside* people, uniting them at the most fundamental level (recalling Merleau-Ponty's notion of “flesh” as both substance and process; 1964, pp. 191–192). Moreover, this sense of constant circulation is the motivation for writing the songs in the first place: “esto pues emotiva que uno escriba temas que realmente gusten ... a mucha gente” (this inspires people to write themes which many people ... really like).

Thus, intersubjective unity is realized not through *suppressing* individual predispositions, but through *building on* them in novel contexts. This is natural if the individual is a composite result of genetic and environmental factors, never a finished product, but always evolving in intimate engagement with the environment around him/her. This was conveyed by the Quechua concepts that formed part of the theoretical framework in this article: qillqay (learning about one's situation by

1 “reading” the environment); yachay (the pro-  
 2 duction of knowledge through engagement  
 3 and concomitant transformation); tinku (the  
 4 mutual constitution of entities through con-  
 5 vergence); yanantin and iskaynintin (difference  
 6 as the potential for complementarity). Thus,  
 7 while environmental circumstances have led to  
 8 the precedence of Spanish over Quechua, this  
 9 has not meant a complete withdrawal from  
 10 pre-Hispanic worldviews. This should be unsur-  
 11 prising if we consider cultural expressions less  
 12 as artefacts and more as pragmatic strategies  
 13 for enhancing our existential possibilities as  
 14 individuals and as communities.

## 17 Conclusion

18  
 19 In this article, I have shown how, for the above  
 20 interviewees, waynu serves a performative pur-  
 21 pose of conflating the boundaries between Self  
 22 and Other. I linked these interpretations with  
 23 Quechua philosophical concepts in order to  
 24 show how, in this context, the “individual” and  
 25 the “social” constitute a single intersubjective  
 26 sphere rather than existing as separate onto-  
 27 logical poles. Merleau-Ponty’s (1964) notion  
 28 of “flesh”, and the concept of “emotional con-  
 29 tagion” (Hatfield et al., 2009) suggested that  
 30 this is not a culturally specific phenomenon.  
 31 Moreover, neurological studies have shown  
 32 that “mirror neurons” allow for the automatic  
 33 transference of messages between individuals,  
 34 without the need for any cognitive mediation  
 35 (Rizzolatti & Craighero, 2004).

36 Thus, my intention in this paper was not  
 37 to argue for a uniquely “Andean” point of  
 38 view. Rather, I aimed to foreground the close  
 39 correspondence between philosophical and  
 40 psychological studies on intersubjectivity and  
 41 the insights of Andean philosophical tendencies,  
 42 all of which can provide a deeper understand-  
 43 ing of the extracts presented in the article. This  
 44 correspondence suggested that the indigenous  
 45 Andean concepts are tapping into fundamental  
 46 truths about what it means to exist in relation

to other beings. Thus, indigenous understand-  
 ings should be taken not just as an object to be  
 studied, but as rational propositions that merit  
 rigorous engagement in their own right.

Moreover, if, as Gálvez (2006) suggests, the  
 “paralinguistic substructure [of songs] com-  
 prises a dimension that is especially apt for  
 creating an emotional state and for expressing  
 inner feelings” (p. 96, my translation), and if  
 emotions should be viewed as “integral parts  
 of an agentic process of social or personal posi-  
 tioning” (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007, p. 47),  
 then the application of an intersubjective ana-  
 lytical framework to the study of verbal art  
 may well constitute a fruitful line of research  
 in uncovering the dynamics of human sociality.

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## Glossary

chimaychi	a sub-genre of waynu autochthonous to Pomabamba (Ancash, Peru)
chuscada	a sub-genre of waynu autochthonous to Chiquián (Ancash, Peru) and surrounding areas
iskaynintin	complementary unity between halves (cf. yanantin)
qillqay	a hermeneutic “reading” of the environment, a mental “mapping” of phenomena, writing or drawing on something
tinku	the act of engagement, out of which entities derive and continuously modify themselves through mutual attunement

waynu	an autochthonous song-genre that is widespread in the Andes
yachay	knowledge and wisdom as acquired through interaction; the acquisition of knowledge as a transformational process both for engager and engaged-with
yanantin	complementary unity between halves (cf. iskaynintin)

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**Appendix: Questions asked in semi-structured interviews:**

1. What is the difference between waynus and other local genres?
2. When/where/by whom are waynus performed?
3. Why, in your opinion, are waynus composed in different languages? What do you think of this mix of languages?
4. What is the relation between the words and the music/dance?
5. How do today's waynus compare with older ones?
6. How popular are waynus compared to the past?
7. What, in your opinion, is the purpose of waynus today?
8. How do waynus contribute to your life?
9. How would you define a "good waynu"?

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