

**Time, tense, landscape, and the
human/nonhuman relationship in
Quechua storytelling**

**Rosaleen Howard
Newcastle University**

**Language and Nature Seminar Series
Leeds University Humanities Research Institute
19 January 2018**

The Andean concept of *pacha*

❖ A native Andean concept for thinking about time, space, and generations of people

World turning (*pachakuti*): fire, earthquakes, Spanish and Inka invasions

Places of origin: lakes, mountains, rivers

Inversion of order: 'the Inkas have gone inside'

Messianic consciousness: 'I will return and be millions'
(Tupac Amaru)

The animate landscape in Andean thought

‘Runakuna have an intimate knowledge of their landscape; every wrinkle in the Earth’s physiognomy – every hill, knoll, plain, ridge, rock outcrop, or lake – possesses a name and a personality. Every child knows a vast number of these place names before the age of ten, for runakuna orient themselves spatially in terms of landmarks rather than through abstract cardinal points’

(Catherine J. Allen. 1988. *The Hold Life Has. Coca and Cultural Identity in an Andean Community*. Washington. Ch. 1)

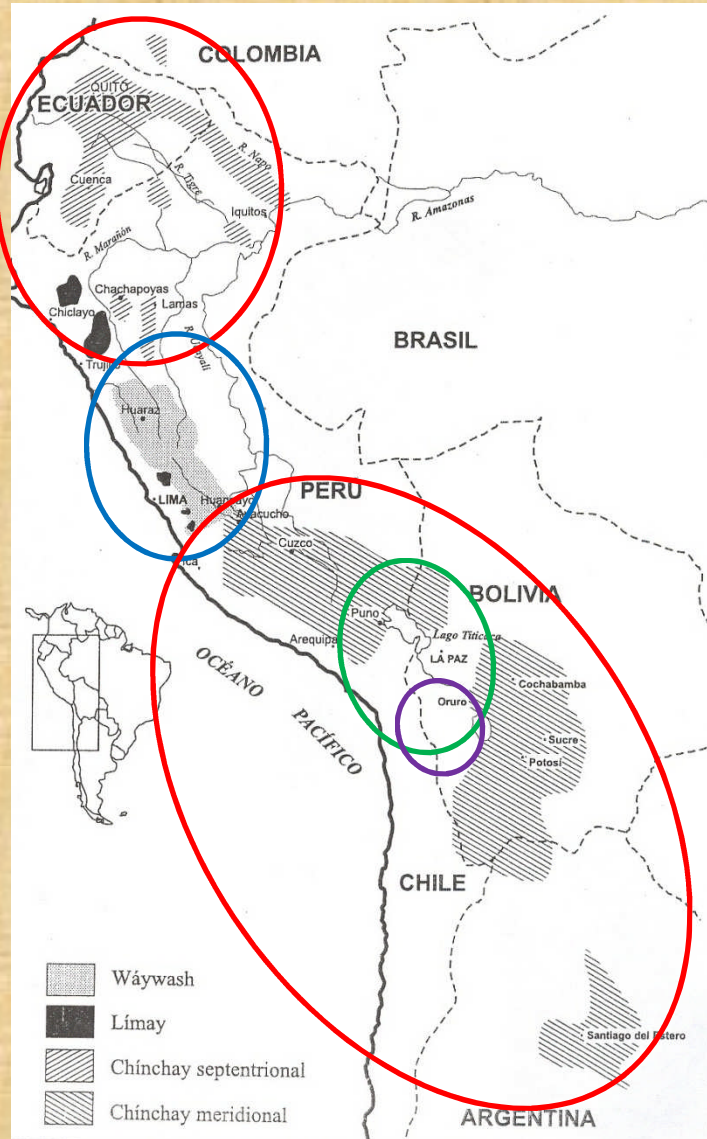
Distribution and classification of Andean languages

Sub-group Quechua I

Sub-group Quechua II

Aru languages (Aymara, Jaqaru, Kawki)

Chipaya



Alfredo Torero. 2002. *Idiomas de los Andes*. Lima: Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos

Quechua I

Tantamayo district,
Huamalíes province,
Huánuco department,
Peru



Huamalíes province



Tantamayo-Piruru arqueological complex, pre-Inca, Late Intermediate period (XII-XIV C), territory of the Yarowillcas



District capital of Tantamayo (Huamalíes)





***Epistemological underpinnings of Quechua oral narrative:
discursive features and situation of performance***

- i. Grammatical markers: tense, evidentiality (source of information) and epistemic modality (truth value)**
- ii. Speaker perspective as revealed in use of grammar**
- iii. The distinction between speech event and narrated event (Jakobson) or storytelling/world representing and story told/world represented (Bakhtin)**
- iv. The use of direct reported speech in shaping the narrative**
- v. Cognitive associations between time, place and person as mutually shaped by landscape and narrative**

Epistemological markers in Huamalíes Quechua

speaker perspective	personal	non-personal
EVIDENTIALS		
personal knowledge	-mi	
non-personal knowledge		-shi
co-constructed knowledge; affirmation	-chaa	
co-constructed knowledge; negation	-taaku	
EPISTEMIC MODALITY		
conjectural	-chir	
speculative	-suraa	
affirmative validation	-mi	
TENSE		
past preterite	-rqa-	
present perfect	-shka-	
narrative past		-naa

The framework of speaker perspective

‘the evidential system is governed by a *perspectival logic* that distinguishes between *different subjectivities* that are making an assertion’

‘we can redefine evidentiality (...) as marking *speaker perspective* rather than source of information’

‘speakers take the trouble to sort out different voices and perspectives’, distinguishing between ‘the voice of the “speaking self” versus the voice of “the other”’

(Nuckolls 2008: 68; my emphasis)

Speech event and narrated event

- **The intertwining of the speech event and the narrated events may reveal the way the relationship between humans and other-than-humans is construed.**
- **The storyteller's world and the world of the story told are not so very far apart; indeed, storytelling performance may reveal that they are as one.**

Use of direct reported speech as a way of shaping the narrative

‘Dialogue is one of the defining features of Native South American... discourse’

(Beier, Michael and Sherzer, 2002)

- Direct reported speech - the dialogue that unfolds between the protagonists of the narrated events - is the prior mechanism by which the story gets told.**
- Dialogue allows for other speaker perspectives than that of the narrator to intervene in the narration.**
- These shifting perspectives are revealed in the use of evidential, epistemic, and tense marking.**

Developing the conceptual framework...

- **Recent thinking in anthropology around ‘the ontological turn’**
- **E. Viveiros de Castro, B. Latour, M. Blaser, M. de la Cadena**
- **Potential for us to study narrative performance as an enactment of what Viveiros has called ‘ontological perspectivism’**

The notion of ontological perspectivism in anthropology

‘The typical “supernatural” situation in an Amerindian world is the meeting in the forest between a man - always on his own - and a being which is seen at first merely as an animal or a person, then reveals itself as a spirit or a dead person and speaks to the man. (...)

These encounters can be lethal for the interlocutor who, overpowered by the non-human subjectivity, passes over to its side, transforming himself into a being of the same species as the speaker: dead, spirit or animal. He who responds to a “you” spoken by a non-human accepts the condition of being its “second person”, and when assuming in his turn the position of “I” does so already as a non-human’.

(Viveiros de Castro, ‘Cosmological deixis and Amerindian perspectivism’, 2006: 562)

Andean example of ontological perspectivism: the worlds and perspectives of the dead ancestors (*machukuna*) and living humans (*runakuna*) are in parallel and intersect

‘The *machukuna* occupy a shadowy world. Normally their world parallels ours like a dark mirror, but in dreams, wind, and moonlight the two worlds intersect. The *machukuna*’s potato fields are “just where ours are” – and yet they are not the same fields. Their nocturnal labour (nocturnal for us, diurnal for them) makes the potatoes grow large in the *runakuna*’s fields, and wind from the *machukuna* burial sites, though it makes humans sick, is described as fertilizer for the potatoes.’

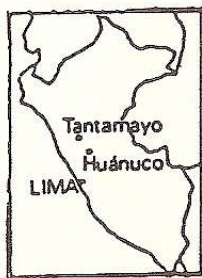
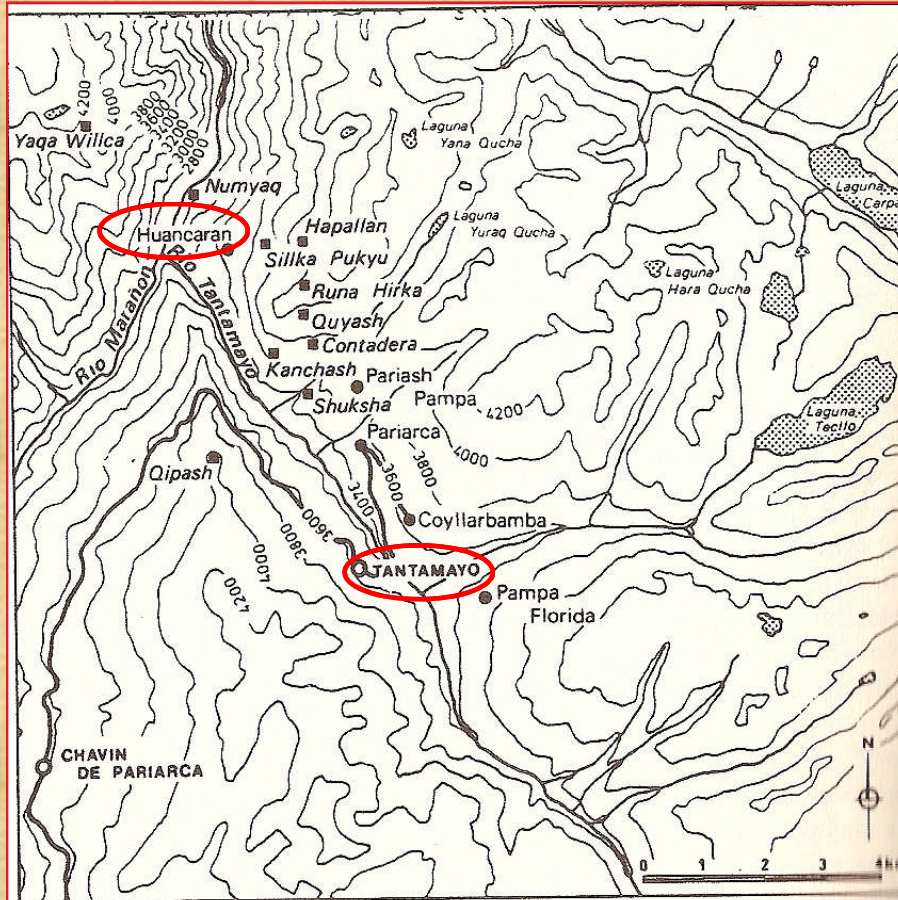
(Catherine J. Allen. 1988. *The Hold Life Has. Coca and Cultural Identity in an Andean Community*. Washington. Ch. 1)

Oral tradition of San Pedro de Pariarca



**District of Tantamayo, Huamalíes province,
department of Huánuco, Peru. Recorded in 1980s.**





KEY: ○ District capitals
 ● Communities and hamlets
 ■ Sites of archaeological and natural interest

Figure 1. Sites mentioned in the oral tradition of Pariarca.

The story of the
 ‘Encantadora’
 (‘Enchantress’)

Tantamayo district,
 province of
 Huamalíes,
 department of
 Huánuco, Peru

Narrated to R. Howard
 by Eladio Marticorena,
 July 2009

Synopsis >>

1. *Sawraqa nishun Encantadora kwintuta.*

So let's tell the tale of the Enchantress.

2. *Say kwintu washa Huancaránchuu mas washa waqtanchuu, Qipaasin castillo kaq laaduchuu, kanaa huk campesino wayiyuq warmiyuq wambrayuq uushayuq*

That tale, beyond Huancarán, further beyond, behind, beside where Qipaasin castle is, **there was once a peasant man with a house, a wife, children, and some sheep.**

16. *“Pitaa cantan?” ninaa, “Pitaa? Tocan guitarrata”, ninaa.*

“Who sings?” he said, “Who is it? They play guitar,” he said.

27. *“Wiyashkaa musico kaqta cantaqtanuu, say yaku shikwamuqchuu” niptinqa, “Qam may qishyanaykankichir saynuu wiyapakushkanki”, ninaa warminqa.*

When he said **“I have heard** a sound of music like someone singing, in the waterfall,” **“Maybe** you are getting sick, that’s why **you have been hearing** things”, his wife **said**.

43. Warminta yapay willan, “Yapaypis wiyashkaami”, nir.

He tells his wife again, ‘I have heard it again for sure,’ saying.

**48. Saychuu aruykaptin (nashi Luis hutin kanaa) say runapa
huk warmipa voznin “Luis” nin.**

**While he is working there (what’s it, his name was Luis)
a woman’s voice says “Luis”.**

61. *Saypitaqa warminqa llakikun “Runaa qishyanchir wiyapakunchir pasachir hirkachir burlakun”, nirqa shuqpisinaa hampisinaa.*

After that his wife is sad and saying, “My man **may be sick**, he **may be hearing things**, **maybe the earth** has grabbed him, **maybe the mountain** is playing tricks on him”, she **had him have a medicinal rub**, she **had him cured**.

76. *Sayshi huk tiempochuu aywan ishkanna warminwan.*

Then one time the two of them go, he and his wife.

77. *Warminwan aywaptinqa imapis kansu.*

When he goes with his wife there is nothing.

87. Saypitaqa huk díachuuqa allquta apanaasu.

After that, one day **he did not take** the dog.

88. Kikillan aywanaa.

He went just by himself.

89. Saychuu aruykaptinqa “Luis” nin yapay.

As he is working there, she says “Luis” again.

95. *Niptinshi* “*Kay warmitaqa nuncapis rikashkaataaku*”,
nirqa “Buenas tardes Señora”, nin.

When she says that, “I have never seen this woman before,” saying, “Good afternoon, Ma’am”, he says.

96. *“Ama nimaysu, nuqa manami señorasu kaa señoritami kaa”, ninshi.*

“Do not say that to me, I am **not** a married woman, I am **a señorita**”, **she says.**

100. *Sayshi* “*Kayta munankiku?*” *nin runata warmi.*

So then, “Do you want this?” the woman says to the man.

101. “*Imataa?*” *niptin* “*Kay qurimi*”, *nin.*

When he says, “What is it?” “**This is gold**”, she says.

102. “*Kay qurimi*” *niptinqa* “*Nuqa imapaaraa apashaa quritaqa?*” *nin.*

When she says, “**This is gold**”, “So what shall I take the gold for?” he says.

145. *“Imataa munaykanki doña?” niptinqa “Kay chakraachuu mururqa nuqawanmi tanki manaqa manami allisu kanki aw wanunkimi”, ninshi.*

When he says, “What do you want, lady?” “Here in my field sowing crops you will live **with me**, if not you will **not be good** and indeed **you will die**”, **she says.**

147. Niptin “Nuqaqa warmiyuqcha**a kaa suriyuq**cha**a
kaa taqay waq simpachuu taaraa”, nin.**

**When she says that, “But I have a wife and I have
a son, I live over there on the other bank of the
river”, he says.**

210. *Say suceede***naa** *saynuu illaqaana***naa** *saychuu runa warmi*
*hirka apana***naa**.

That happened, in that way the man **disappeared** there,
the woman **carried him off** to the mountain.

211. *Saypita saytaqa Encantadora hutin hutisiyash say*
*Huancarán washwaqta***mi** *mntikunapa*.

After that they named that place-woman ‘Enchantress’;
it is over beyond Huancarán through the scrub.

To conclude...

- Grammatical analysis is revealing of speaker perspective and so also can be seen to constitute the shifting, fluid and ambivalent relationship between the human and non-human worlds in Andean ways of thinking.
- Language shapes nature and nature shapes language