

INTRODUCTION

My motivation for writing this chapter is to call attention to a 'Feminine Symbolic'¹ that I believe constitutes the core of Andean conceptualizations of gender. The argument that I will present is as follows: The feminine, as an abstraction, is an unmarked category, whereas the masculine is elaborated, or marked. In addition, androgyny is a primary force in the continual recreation and reproduction of the world motivated by female sex and desire, not by biological reproduction. Such a gender schema provides an alternative to Lacan's symbolic which makes patriarchy seem inevitable. What is critical in my view for current feminist debates is that in the Andean gender schema that I will put forward for discussion, women are socially valorized. Moreover, female desire, abundant in both ethnographic and mythic texts, is culturally constructed to be more powerful than male desire, and that power is also socially valorized. Irene Silverblatt (1987:443) has argued that: "The Incas did not hold to the belief, a Western legacy, that sexuality and fecundity in women required external control if they were not to become destructive." In the mythic texts that I analyze and present here, women are assigned the responsibility of impounding male sexuality, represented as rushing irrigation water. It is male sexuality that is potentially destructive in the form of floods, whereby female desire and sexuality are propitiated ritually and represented as one of the 'prime-movers' of the ever-changing world. In these texts, sexual reproduction is often a misbegotten affair that goes awry. For example, in chapter two of the Huarochirá Tales, the heroine, Caui Llaca, disappears with a child (gender unspecified) who was begotten by a male trickster, Cuni Raya, without sexual intercourse. He inseminated her by putting his semen in a lácuma fruit, which she eats. When the child is a year old and crawling, she attempts to determine who had inseminated her by directing the child to name the father and he/she crawls up into the lap of Cuni Raya, who is disguised as a begger. Disgusted, she takes the child and walks into the all-encompassing female sea, never turning her face back to Cuni Raya (chapt. 2, sec 18), even though he transforms himself from the filthy begger she despises into a handsome resplendent youth dressed in gold. The unmarked feminine totality, the sea, reabsorbs Caui Llaca and the ungendered child and a new world (new time/space) results whereby other feminine heroines also escape

¹My interpretation of Andean myths and cultural practices that express a Feminine Symbolic has been guided by a reading of Luce Irigaray who argues in "The Bodily Encounter With the Mother" (Whitford 1991:34-46) that: "The maternal function underpins the social order and the order of desire..." She also makes the important point that Freud forgot a more archaic murder than the murder of the father in Totem and Taboo -- the murder of the mother which was necessary for the patriarchal Rule of the Father to be established. In examining Andean culture, we find a symbolic system in which the mother is not 'murdered,' female desire is valued and the body of the mother is wholistic and fluid (rather than 'holistic and bounded' (see Irigaray's "Volume Without Contours" in Whitford 1991). Feminist struggling with the masculine symbolic system of values of our own cultural heritage would at least entertain new questions by reading investigations of other cultures' conceptualizations and values of sex and gender. These new perspectives could provide a means of disputing the attributed universalism of patriarchy, the oedipal complex etc.

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from Cuni Raya, the trickster. Whether or not he succeeds in actually engaging in sexual intercourse with them is unclear; it is certain, however, that the women flee from his efforts to entrap them.² These episodes of the myth demonstrate female power to control sexual desire. Even though the trickster successfully inseminates Caui Llaca, she has the power to refuse to become his property, and to deny him rights over his child. Sex, desire and reproduction are separated in the myths and directed by distinct forces and moreover, throughout the myths, I find that female desire and sexuality are organizing principles for the definition of the social world. Let me stress that it is female desire that is fundamental to the myths, not reproduction.

Many of the current feminist debates focus on alternatives to Lacanian explanations of phallic dominance and femininity as the negative (or empty) term in sexual difference (Brennan 1989).³ Radical shifts in perspectives are called for that allow an examination of sex and gender in other cultural and historical contexts. And it is toward that end that I present a gender schema in which sexual difference is constructed out of mythical origins whereby 'the feminine' is not conceived of as an empty category, nor are women considered lesser males lacking phalluses. For example, the female figures in the Huarochirá Tales exist *sui generi* as five women in one, who through their actions, establish sexual as well as social differentiation and hierarchy. Female sexuality and desire are highly valorized for ongoing differentiation whereas male sexuality must be controlled. The feminine, as an abstraction, is unmarked and androgyny is central to the continuity of human life.

²Chapter 2 of Huarochir_, Salomon and Urioste 1991:46-50 and Taylor 1987: 53-73. In both of these translations, there is no mention of the fact that the Quechua term, *churi*, which means 'child' male speaking or child of a man is used in the text and not *wawa*, which is the genderless term used by women. *Churi* is generally used with a gender-specified term, *qari churi*, male child, or *warmi churi*, female child to render son or daughter of a man. I interpret this lack of gender specification as highly significant in that the child, the result of a trick insemination of a virgin, is not claimed by its mother who returns it to the liquid source of all things, the sea. The child never becomes social, gendered nor human and its mother, Caui Llaca, never looks back at Cuni Raya, the trickster, no matter how much he pleads or displays his beauty, or his gold and finery. She has the power of refusal and becomes reincorporated into her mother. If my interpretation has any merit at all, *churi* should at least be translated as his child, not her son.

³Brennan's edited volume has an excellent collection of articles from different perspectives and her introduction serves as a bibliographical guide to many of the debates. For my argument, Part Four, "Towards Another Symbolic: Beyond the Phallus" is important. Also relevant is Butler's Gender Trouble 1990 and Luce Irigaray's This Sex Which is Not One 1985. For discussions of how psychoanalytic perspectives have framed the relationship between mother and child from Freud to Klein and Winnicott see The M(other) Tongue: Essays in Feminist Psychoanalytic Interpretation, edited by Nelson Garner, Kahane and Sprengnether, 1985. Wright's essay, "Thoroughly Postmodern Feminist Criticism" 1989 is an excellent introduction to three distinct positions: 1) that of American and British feminists who fight patriarchy on a day to day bases or refute it; 2) the French school which is developing a new metaphysics' and 3) the position she takes, which is amenable to my anthropological point of view, namely that gender identity is a cultural construct and equally problematic for both sexes. Chodorow's work (1978) on object-relations and the difficulty that women have of separating from their mothers has become familiar to anthropologists interested in identity. For astute criticism of Chodorow see Whitford (1989) who compares Chodorow with the more radical position of Irigaray. For an astute analysis of Freud's treatment of the figure of the mother, see Sprengnether's important volume, The Spectral Mother, 1990.

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I am convinced by Duviols' (1976) argument that because the Spanish encountered sets of beliefs and practices extremely foreign to them, their descriptions were often faulty; therefore, many ethnohistorical accounts misinterpret key concepts. Gender constructions appear to have been especially difficult for the Spanish to understand. For example, Duviols argues that at death, an elite Andean person was transformed into a double: the mummified flesh of the living person, the mallqui, the feminine half representing the germinating seed for future generations, and the masculine half, a phallic stone representing the inseminating force, the huaca. This androgynous "double" represent perfect gender closure at death and is a perfect example of how gender is an abstract construct that is culturally assigned with value regardless of biological sex. Both sexes were transformed into this androgenous double, the link between the living, the dead and the future. Both the mummy bundle, the mallqui and the huaca were dressed in fine cloth and venerated. The term mallqui, which means ancestor or descendant of either sex, as well as new growth of a tree or plant,⁴ embodies to a greater degree continuity through time and space and therefore, I would argue, represents a strong form of female unmarkedness because semantically it implies its counterpart, the male huaca.

The abstract Andean "double" (mallqui/huaca) which forms the androgynous whole of a living person after death as she or he moves toward divinity appears to be similar to Mesoamerican concepts of divinity. According to Sylvia Marcos (1991:62): "Many ancient Mesoamerican deities were goddess-god pairs beginning with the supreme creator, Ometeotl, whose name means two-god or 'double god.'" Marcos goes on to explain that gender permeated every aspect of life as an ever-changing inentity. Duality in the Mesoamerican cosmovision was not fixed and static, but fluid and constantly changing. Moreover, other similarities with the Andean conceptualizations of gender and divinity exist. For example, the Aztecs generally used the word Teotl, which Marcos translates literally as stony but figuratively means powerful or permanent. They also believed that sexual pleasure was positive for both sexes, but whether female desire plays a similar role as it does in precolonial Andean conceptualizations is unclear. In these symbolic systems where divine androgyny is dynamic and permeates every aspect of life, patriarchy is not evident. In the Andean case, if either gender is predominant, it is 'the feminine'. In both regions, Christianity, through the Spanish conquest, imposed patriarchy and sin⁵ which instituted a gender system with 'the feminine' of Mediterranean culture of that time. In the Andes, female desire, manifest by striking sets of sexual beliefs and practices, was considered dangerous⁶; women were lesser beings

⁴In her study of the ethnobotny of Chinchero, Peru, C. Franquemont (1988) has pointed out that the vast majority of plants are considered androgynous.

⁵Harrison (1992) documents the imposition of the concept of sin in the Andes and Marcos (1991:61) cites a lecture by Burkhart as evidence that the Nahua had no concept of punishment for sins after death.

⁶See Margaret R. Miles' Carnal Knowing (1989) for a fascinating study of female nakedness in Christian art. For an historical analysis of violence against women, see Miles (1987). Central to Spanish persecution of women was the obvious eroticism, desire and sexual pleasure that women in Mesoamerica and the Andes enjoyed. Marcos (1991) cites the following researches in Mesoameric as relevant: Marcos 1976, 1989, Nash 1978, Nash and Leacock 1982, and Lopez-Austin 1988.

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lacking phalluses and so began the persecution of sex and desire, with female desire considered especially sinful and dangerous (Silverblatt 1987). Harrison (1992) reports that Andean colonial confessionals contained 238 questions about sexual practices. The response of Andean people was to construct confessional quipus, ideal confessions in knotted strings that conformed to the Spanish priests' expectations. These quipus were passed from confessor to confessor during obligatory annual mass confessions. I will return to these issues in the conclusion, entitled: "An imagined History of Gender in the Andes."

The second half of this analysis deals with ethnographic materials largely drawn from my fieldwork in the village of Chuschi, department of Ayacucho, Peru in the 1970's. I examine gender formation along the life course and into the after-life. I find that life begins with the feminine as an unmarked category; androgyny again is a life force and female sexuality is valorized and linked to power. There is scant evidence for female control of male sexuality, which may be a significant change resulting from centuries of Spanish domination. The ethnographic literature does demonstrate examples of androgyny. For example, Catherine Allen (1988:48-49) in describing the difference between Pacha Mama and Pacha Tira, explains that the generalized Earth is treated as female while the Pacha Tira emphasize the perverse aspects of Pacha's complex nature. Pacha, she says, refers to the world existing in time and tira stresses the materiality of the world, without a temporal dimension. A third category of the animated cosmos (Allen's term), the Tirakuna are conceptualized as 'Places' "...which seem to be localizations of the vitality animating the material Earth as a whole. " These Places are hierarchically organized and assume a male aspect. But, she goes on to explain that ..."maleness and femaleness do not stand in rigid opposition to each other. A given entity may be considered male in some contexts and female in others, according to the qualities it manifests."⁷

As we begin our exploration of gender schema in Andean cultures, through time and space, I must remind readers at the outset that we are dealing with abstract categories, not biological sex. Therefore, let's begin with a brief overview of gender research and its application to Andean research.

⁷Gisbert (1990) has argued forcefully that Viracocha was an androgenous deity. For other examples of androgyny see Martinez 1983 and Pease 1973. Bouysse and Harris 1987 do not discuss gender in their excellent treatment of the Aymara concept of Pacha as the differentiation of time, which they argue does not refer to eternity nor to a succession of infinite moments, but rather to delimited epochs of specific duration. Sullivan 1985, drawing heavily on Pease 1973, develops a model of Andean cosmogony in which there were four successive ages of the world. Three of which were of unbroken duration, unbroken darkness, unbroken light and perpetuity of stone. Each of these ended in catastrophic destructions. Only the last resulted in fragmentation of duration, light, darkness and the animation of stone. It is this latter age that concerns us here.

A Brief Overview of Gender Research and its Application to Andean Cultures

The anthropological study of gender over the last decade has moved away from the search for universal categories generated by reproduction as the "natural" bases for taxonomies (Errington 1990) toward the historicization and contextualization of sex and gender as cultural constructs. For example, Errington (1990:36) argues that we should distinguish between "Sex, sex, and gender" whereby "Sex" refers to a particular construct of the human body while "sex" refers to the body but does not assign content. Following the direction in current research she reserves "gender" or "gender system" for what particular cultures make of sex. At first glance, and especially for those readers who have not dealt with sex and gender as research questions, these distinctions might seem unnecessary. On the contrary, they serve as a constant reminder that culture imbues meaning to the human body and its reproductive functions. By keeping that message in focus, we are able to avoid reification and ask new questions. As I reviewed Andean ethnographies, I was struck by the lack of research on concepts of the human body and the cultural constructions that give specific meaning to gender. Consideration of "Sex" (in Errington's sense) in Andean culture will have to wait for future research. I found no systematic studies that would enable us to understand the Andean system of gender from that point of view. For example, we have no descriptions of how the interior and exterior of the human body are conceptualized in relationship to gender. Nor do we have studies on conception, birth and the contributions that mothers and fathers make to a growing fetus. We do have, fortunately, an excellent study of women's expressive forms of desire, sexuality and power in Regina Harrison's Signs, Songs and Memories (1989). Her work has provided a guide-post for this present study, especially in regard to careful analyses of the polytypy (Freidrich 1991) of gender.

Through a re-examination of my own research on child socialization combined with an analysis of origin myths, I have been able to construct a model of gender tropes as a dynamic process throughout the life cycle from birth to death, and beyond into the afterlife - into the domain of the spirits and ancestors. Ethnographically, I found that gender "growth" is based on an analogy with the growth of the potato and its conversion into chuñu, dehydrated, storable tubers - hence the title of this chapter - "From Unripe to Petrified" - infants are born unripe, the elderly become chuñu, "dried potatoes" - the process continues after death resulting in petrified ancestors, the mallki 'seeds' and the stone huacas. Throughout this cycle, the various stages of gender development are marked for either femaleness or maleness in an alternating fashion that will be detailed below, with female markedness predominating. Unripe infants are categorical females; maleness is continuously differentiated until marriage, when society takes control of female sexuality and reproductivity. After reproduction and into old age, both sexes are considered to be more male than female. Gender differentiation of ancestors is problematic in the ethnographic literature, although the evidence suggests that remote ancestors are

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androgynous. Moreover there is clear evidence for androgyny in the world of the living in the form of waris, reproductive animals and beings to be described below. Androgyny has not been well-documented because the question has not been adequately addressed. Too often potentially androgynous entities have been accommodated into polarized dual categories of male and female which mitigates against discovering representations of androgyny.

Initial research on sex and gender in the Andes was based on the assumption that reproduction is the "natural" basis for complementarity (for example see Isbell 1976 and Harris 1980). Both studies emphasized the unity of husband and wife: Harris noted little strongly marked symbolization of difference between the sexes (1980:72) and I stressed complementarity to the extent that I called my article, "The Essential Other Half: Sexual Complementarity in the Andes." The depiction of gender in the Andes that emerged in the 1970s and 80s reified the categories of male and female as the "natural" reproducers of society without examining gender, or "Sex" in Errington's sense. In the analysis presented here, I argue that androgyny is a fundamental category in the gender system of the Andes and by androgyny I mean an entity that is female and male and considered reproductive. Moreover, androgyny in Andean gender schema is not simply some kind of ultimate complementarity, rather it should be thought of as synecdochial: the androgynous whole is larger than its female and male parts.⁸

With regard to power and gender, a topic of great concern in current studies of sex and gender, Andean research fares better. The status of women in the Andes has been studied extensively. Collins (1987) presents a summary of some seventy studies that she divides into two paradigms: one she calls "woman subverted" which maintains that Andean women's statuses today are a result of a decline in their power and prestige. This paradigm assumes prior egalitarian and complementary relations. She makes the important point, citing Fabian (1983), that distance in space (urban - modern versus rural - traditional) is transformed into distance in time whereby equality is seen by scholars as primordial and inequality as its degeneration (1987:6). The second paradigm, Collins calls "woman unbound," which emphasizes the increasing opportunities and empowerment Andean women have today through participation in the labor and commodity markets, through education and finally through release from the peasant family, which is characterized as patriarchal. She correctly points out that these two polarized positions reflect how we, as researchers, reconstruct the past and processes of change and she calls for an awareness of the precise ways in which our subjectivity and our politics structures our research. Weismantel's (1988) analysis of complex web of "gastropolitics" that surround the preparation and serving of food in the Ecuadorian highlands escapes the pitfalls of these two polarized positions and demonstrates the relationships between food, gender and power.

⁸This is not a small point because such a conceptualization of androgeny draws attention to the dynamics of the totality rather than allowing one to slip back into static dualism and the essentialism of the oppositions such dualism implies. See Wright 1989 on 'The Symbolic Order,' quoted above.

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I agree with Collins' assessment that our own desires for political change require constant self-analysis and self-criticism. Indeed, gender is not a neutral subject for any of us and therefore, I will attempt to make my own biases clear as I discuss gender. For example, in my interpretation of the origin myths, I am challenging the male-dominated Freudian interpretations that rationalizes male power and the control of the state. In my analysis of my ethnographic materials collected in the 1970's, I am privileging the symbolic functions of women, searching for evidence of androgyny, and reconceptualizing gender to conform to the major Andean tropes of growth, death, and regeneration.

Several authors have examined the role of colonialism and the state in regard to the statuses of Andean women. Silverblatt's (1980, 1987, 1991) continuing research on the transformation of women's statuses during the colonial period suggests new ways to look at female power and male dominance under state rule. Documenting the gender politics of the Inka Empire, she examines the concatenation of historical and political events that caused women to flee to high table lands in order to maintain native religious practices which in turn made them vulnerable to inquisitorial accusations of witchcraft. Silverblatt's work has gone a long way to challenge the assumptions prevalent in what I am calling "imagined histories of gender." For Harris (1980) it is necessary to look at the way in which the state limits or enhances the male structure of power. Deere (1978) and Deere and Leon de Leal (1982) insist upon analyses of class, and caution against identifying class structure and poverty as simply traditional. Finally, Collins advocates examination of the cultural value placed on the spheres in which women predominate, such as child care or management of the food supply in addition to women's activities in production and the market. The exclusion of these spheres of women's power reflect our own gender system which devalues them. My goal in this work is to contribute to our understanding of the tropes that surround gender and specifically the images of women, their sexuality and power, in the Andean cultures represented in mythic and ethnographic texts.

PART II GENDER TROPES MOVING ALONG THE LIFE COURSE: THE PROCESS OF DIFFERENTIATION

Unripe Infancy

The ethnographic material for this analysis was collected during the decade of the 1970's when I did fieldwork in the village of Chuschi in the department of Ayacucho, Peru.⁹ I am going to write in the past tense rather than the customary 'ethnographic present' because of the horrendous violence that has engulfed

⁹Isbell 1985

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Chuschi along with a great part of the Peruvian Andes (Isbell 1992).¹⁰ Whether such global violence has transformed the tropes of gender is a question that I cannot answer, therefore, I will describe the process of gender growth as I observed it in the 1970's. Both parents participated in the birth of a child. A newborn was called a lulu wawa, a wet, green, unripe infant. During birth, the father sat behind his wife and pushed down on her belly as she gave birth in a kneeling position. Onlookers saw four hands and four legs and it appeared that both parents were giving birth to the child. The father then assisted the midwife as she buried the afterbirth near the hearth and they both gave the newborn its first cold bath. Minimal attention was given to the 'unripe' newborn for the first six weeks or so of life; she was nursed and carried on her mother's back; her swaddling was changed from time to time but very little emotional investment or attention was directed to her during this critical period. This emotional distancing was probably a psychological mechanism to protect parents from the trauma of high infant mortality: in regions without health care, infant mortality before the age of five can be as high as fifty percent, with even higher mortality before the age of two.

During this so called 'unripe' phase, infants were tightly bound so that their limbs would grow straight and strong. If newborns survived this period of 'ripening' then kindred members began to pamper and indulge them; names were conferred and additional sets of godparents could be chosen. Swaddling would be loosened so that their arms were freed. The process of 'ripening' is a metaphor based on vegetative growth; however in the case of an infant, the ripening process results in the child becoming truly human only when she is able to sit up and sustain her own weight. Like a plant, an 'unripe' infant must become strong.

As infants ripened into humanness, that is as they sat up and then began to toddle, fathers addressed them by gender specific terms: warmi churi for a female child and qari churi for male child. But mothers continued to call them wawa - which can be translated as 'baby' (figure 1) - but dropped the descriptive term, lulu. The asymmetry of address perhaps reflects the differential relationship that parents have toward their newborn vis-a-vis the cultural construction of gender and this contrast in the terms of address used by parents probably reflects a significant semantic difference worthy of further investigation.¹¹ Women, however, were the major care-givers of the young and thus a child lived her early years almost entirely in a female world. Both sexes were dressed in the clothing typical of adult women -- long skirts and shirts. Their hair was allowed to continue to grow and was most often matted and unkempt. In appearance, 'unripe infants' looked like untidy, wrapped-up bundles on their mothers' backs. A bit of 'female wildness' that must ripen into humanness.

Walking Into Childhood and the World of Work

¹⁰Isbell 1992

¹¹See Martinez (1983) for a Gremaisian analysis of toponyms in which he states there are androgynous 'Places'- to use C. Allen's term.

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When infants began to walk,¹² a series of important changes took place: clothing became gender specified whereby boys were given their first pair of pants while girls continued to appear as minatures of adult women. At some time during this phase, hair styles were differentiated as well. A hair-cutting ceremony included a ritual to bestow a child's first inheritance, usually in the form of herd animals, was performed. The timing of the ritual was determined by the willingness and ability of relatives to provide inheritable goods. Ideally, both sexes inherited in a parallel fashion, that is to say, girls inherited from their mothers and boys from their fathers. Boys began to be incorporated into the world of men and this transition was marked symbolically as their long, matted, unkept hair was shorn in a public ritual that linked gender with inheritance. Girls also received their inheritance from their female kin at a hair cutting ritual, but only a tiny piece of hair was cut. Rather, it was combed into two braids to resemble the hair style of adult women. For a girl child, the female wildness was socialized into braids whereas such wildness was shorn from boys at a time when they were removed from their mothers' care and thrust into the larger world of men's activities. The images that come to my mind in regard to women's hair involve sex and marriage. Braids are the entwining of desire for socially acceptable reproduction.

Hair was an object of desire and notions of female beauty often focussed on women's thick, shiny, long braids. One of the most sensual acts women could perform was to unbraid, wash and comb their hair. A mature married woman who combs her hair in public is considered to be a wanton woman but when a pasña, an unmarried sexually active woman (see below) did so she was considered merely flirtatous. Hair was also considered to have magical power and one must never lose even one strand of hair during combing or washing. Catherine Allen (1988:62) reports that if just one hair was lost, the unfortunate person would be transformed into a kukuchi, a being that is tied to the earth forever searching for that single hair unable to rot after death and thereby return to Earth Mother's bosom. Therefore, these poor souls who cannot free themselves of their smelly green bodies, are destined to roam the earth in search of their lost hair, cannibalizing the living. Their sin of losing one hair was considered second only to the greatest of sins: the sin of incest which transforms one into a kukuchi (in the Cuzco region) and into a qarqacha in Ayacucho.

After children were socially recognizable as one sex or the other and after they had received their initial inheritance, they may be called by a common term by both parents - warma. We can translate the term as child between the ages of five to ten. Socialization during this time focussed on appropriate sex role behaviors and skills. Again, mobility was one of the major characteristics that initiated this stage of gender differentiation.

¹²Both Harris 1980 and Harrison 1988 found that walking was a similar developmental marker in Bolivia and Ecuador.

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Children literally moved from their initial symbolic identification as females - that tightly bound 'unripe bundle' carried on their mothers' backs - into the gender specified world of work. The acquisition of skills began around the household and moved beyond to the high pastures. Child labor was important to all activities, but for communities that maintained herds, children of both sexes began tending animals as early as seven or eight years of age. Often children were required to spend nights alone or with an older sibling on the high, cold puna, considered the savage part of the world, tending the family's flocks of sheep, cattle, alpacas and llamas.¹³ As their skills increased, the terms used to address them became gender-specified and communicated that the most gender intensified time of one's life - adolescence - was just around the corner. Semantically the two gender terms for pre-adolescents (sipas for girls and maqta for boys) focused on the fact that girls were about to become, but were not yet, sexually active. Once a girl was known to be sexually active, she was called pasña. Boys, however, were called maqta, whether they were sexually active or not. Everyone anticipated the next phase of the gender process as these pre-adolescents, now skilled in most of the work tasks required of them, took their most significant step along the path of gender differentiation - into the experiential world of adolescence 'play' where sexual and intellectual explorations were linked in competitive play.

Adolescence: A Time of Female Supremacy in Sex, Intellect and Power

Competitive group sex accompanied by intellectual games of riddles and song duels characterized adolescence in the Quechua-speaking communities of the River Pampas region of the Ayacucho during the 1970's. These competitive sexual marathons engaged in by adolescents, granted young women an exalted status due to their superior sexual prowess evident by their ability to outlast young men during the all night rigors of group sex. Young men compensated by forming quasi-military organizations. Younger boys, who did not engage in the 'games', accompanied and served older boys who had earned the title of 'capitán' in the amorous games by their public display of verbal cleverness and sexual stamina. The jobs of the younger boys, 'the soldiers', included fetching alcohol, holding hats, and generally supporting their capitanes during the sexual and verbal battles. The hierarchy among boys that emerged parallels that of the adult religious - political hierarchy, the cargo system. No such hierarchy emerged among girls who instead acquired a new term of address that clearly implied that they were now sexually and verbally skilled women, the pasñaakuna. Sex and language are positively linked and women are considered victorious. If we wanted to construct a hypothetical cultural response to the Freudian-Lacanian construction of the image of women and lacking phalluses, language and power, we could not do better than this Andean culture has done, even after four hundred years of Spanish Catholic domination.

¹³For a study of the acquisition of the complex skill of weaving in the Cuzco region of Peru, see Franquemont, Isbell, and Franquemont 1992. In the Cuzco region women learn to weave, in Ayacucho, men are the weavers.

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The amorous play, called pukllay, meaning to play, or vida michiy, to put life out to pasture, linked intellectual and sexual explorations so that anyone who became skilled at the competitive riddle games was also presumed to be a skilled lover. The objective of the riddle games and song duels was to explore the semantic and conceptual boundaries of sex in poetic language. The games were highly creative and one generation did not know the riddles of another. The riddle competitions constructed novel imagery and metaphors resulting in a highly intensified series of conceptual and sexual negotiations between young men and women. Conceptual boundaries were explored and an atmosphere similar to that of competitive warfare was set to music with dancing and verbal dueling as the major armaments. Young women, who usually initiated the games, were said to be victorious after these night sessions. These sexual competitions, which took place during adult community rituals, could only occur in the places considered wild or uncivilized: the high puna, where the herds were kept, or in the cemetery, on top of the graves of the ancestors. The results of the play were carried over into the daytime interactions of the young men and women in the form of insults and jokes. Girls were often brutal in their references to the lack of sexual prowess of young men. Adolescence was clearly a time of female power to which young men reacted by creating not only a political-military hierarchy, but they had another advantage as well. Young girls did not participate before they were ready to become sexually active; nor did girls create any kind of hierarchy other than than prestige based on their sexual performance. Boys, however, had a period of apprenticeship before they took part in the games. When asked the reason for this, girls joked that 'boys needed more practice.' The performative aspects of gender identity were the major foci during adolescence and as part of the performance of male gender, young men took up music with a vengeance. Groups of young maqta (whether sexually active or not) could be seen strolling in public places singing love songs accompanied by guitars or other stringed instruments such as the small chinlili or the mandolin. Just as a sexually active pasña was known by her decorative hair ribbons, maqta could be recognized by the elaborate colored ribbons tied to their stringed instruments; however, their skills at musical performances were displayed prior to their sexual performances (which were so often failures). The sexually non-active 'soldiers' who attended their more experienced cohort were also addressed as maqta, if they participated in one of adolescent musical group. Both sexes decorated their hats with flowers, feathers, or bits of jewelry as an announcement of their sexual availability. If a married man or woman wore such decorations, they became the brunt of ribald joking. Public displays of music seemed to me not simply the major 'weapon' by which young men were said to conquer young women, but rather a public compensatory display. The newly created quasi-military hierarchy led by their capitán, armed with amorous music strutted during daylight hours in the public civilized centers of villages. But when their home communities celebrated festivals, the night-time gatherings of viday michiy brought into sharp focus the young men's lack of sexual performance. During these competitions in the savage puna or in the cemetery, pas_a put young men to the test and women emerged victorious. Their victories were not publically acknowledged except for the display of colored ribbons, hat ornaments or other tokens of sexual prowess, which

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young men displayed whether they were successful in their sexual attempts or not. Perhaps this difference in cultural commentary prepared both sexes for marriage, when society takes control of women's sexuality. Perhaps it also reflects four centuries of Spanish domination.

If a love relationship between a couple developed out of the amorous play, the young man would weave a special, thin, black ribbon which has numerous colored woolen balls attached to both ends. After stealing an article of the girl's clothing, usually a woven belt or a shawl, he would give her the ribbons as a gift. If she accepted the gift and allowed him to keep her belt or shawl, she was tacitly agreeing to continue a sexual relationship with him (the equivalent of going steady). She then entwined the ribbons in her hair; the colored balls swinging sassily to and fro on her hips (made to look invitingly round by five or six skirts) announced to the community that she had accepted a lover. People would jokingly point out the ribbons and comment that she was now a pas_a, a sexually active young woman.

The Semantics of Sex and Desire: Gender and Markedness

In the poetic language of Quechua riddle games that we studied in the 1970's,¹⁴ maleness was generally marked semantically and stood in a metonymic (or synecdochical) relationship to femaleness. For example, in a riddle created by a twenty four year-old bachelor and answered by a fourteen year-old boy, the sexual imagery illustrates the metonymic relation of sexual metaphors. The riddle poses the following:

Waqna munte wayquchamanta
Uchuychalla turucha
Taka sikicha pi_a pin_cha
Qawachakamuchkan

Answer: *Verga* (Spanish-a slang term for penis that refers to a leather club made from the penis of a bull).

Translation:

'From a deep, forested ravine
An itty, bitty, very, very angry bull without a tail
Is peeking out'.

¹⁴These have been published in English (Isbell and Roncalla 1977) and in Spanish (Isbell and Roncalla 1978). All of the riddles discussed here were originally published in the above cited articles.

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The answer, a penis or rather a Spanish slang term for penis - a club made from the penis of a bull (already a metonym), is metonymically found in a forested ravine. The imagery of these spontaneously created sexual tropes gives the impression that the tiny bull has fallen into the deep ravine and that is why it is angry. The bull has been swallowed up by the ravine and incorporated into the vagina of Earth Mother (I wonder if the image of the missing tail refers to reduced masculinity). Nevertheless, none of the imagery posed any problem for the fourteen year-old boy who gleefully gave the correct answer.

Ravine, wayqu, is a common trope of contiguity for vagina as an anatomical reference to a body part of Earth Mother. We will see in the discussion of origin myths, that the image of ravine has the same meaning. In this riddle the sexual imagery, from a Freudian point of view, perhaps reflects the anxiety young adolescent boys experience during the sexual competitions that accompany the riddle games. The word, pi_a (angry) can also mean erect and is a frequent reference for sexual excitement of both men and women. A joke played on unsuspecting foreigners is to pull the naive person's hair (or engage in some other small annoyance) and then ask: Are you angry at me? If the annoyed person answers, yes, to their surprise, everyone breaks out in laughter.

The suffixes on the root, qawa (look), indicate a delicate action, thus the translation of peeking out. The use of the Spanish slang term for penis instead of the Quechua word, pisqo might have been influenced by the choice of the Spanish word, *toro*, pronounced as туру in the first line of the riddle. An analysis of systematic code-switching into Spanish might reveal a pattern of hierarchy in gender relations, a semantic aspect that did not occur to me when I published these materials originally.

A well known riddle expressed the same semantic relation whereby maleness was added to an already existing female 'field.' and again, 'to be angry' was used as an image of sexual excitement, or in this case, the pre-existing sexual desire of an old woman. Moreover, the key words in the riddle are in Spanish as is the answer.

'Negra vieja pi_akun.

Yana machu kallpayku

Upallachin.

Answer: *Olla y chucar_n.* (Spanish)

Translation:

'An old, black woman is making herself angry

Unexpectedly, an old man comes running

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and calms her down.'

The answer is a cooking pot and ladle - the old black woman is the cooking pot and the old black man, the ladle. The paired references for old black woman (in Spanish, *negra vieja*) and old black man, (in Quechua, *Yana machu*), is asymmetrical. *Machu*¹⁵ is a general term in the Ayacucho region for maleness, either human or animal, and can be used to refer to male virility as well. The Quechua term for old woman, *paya* does not have such a broad reference. Moreover, *paya* is a term of respect whereas *machu* can be used disrespectfully. The old woman is making herself angry (sexual excitement/the boiling contents of the pot) which is a common trope for female sexual desire based on the turbulent movement of the water as well as the foam that bubbles to the top.

Harrison (1989:162-165) gives an extremely enlightening discussion of the symbolic relationship between water, sex and bathing that not only will have bearing on the discussion of the semantics in the riddles under discussion, but will have relevance for my analysis of the Huarochir_ origin myths in the second part of this chapter. I quote:

In the river's foam here he wooed her. When he makes love to her she will (want to) bathe, they say. Again and again he/she/they make love, bathing with the foam of the river. With this foam, she is "loosened," they say. Making love with him with *simayuka* (a love potion) and in the foam of the river (pg. 163).

The old woman, (who has caused herself to be excited) is calmed down by the running arrival of the old man who quiets her desire. In both of the riddles cited above, the female state, the ravine and the boiling cooking pot, common tropes for female sexual desire, are prior to the male elements, the bull and the old man, both of which arrive on the semantic scene unexpectedly. These riddle created by adolescents suggest that female desire is the unmarked state which semantically exist prior to male sexual acts to satisfy that desire. Moreover, maleness in the riddles is elaborated upon, marked or appears as an additional element to a semantic field that presupposes it.¹⁶ The sex act creates a new trope of contiguity whereby the male category is incorporated into the female one. These symbolic and semantic relations are consistent with the experiential

¹⁵ Harrison (1989:116-117) discusses the historical roots of *macho* and says that it was originally a Mexican-Spanish word that referred to nonhuman male entity such as an animal or plant. That useage is consistant with the Quechua speaking usage that I found in Chuschi. Harrison goes on to discuss the modern *machismo*, *Marianismo* (the idealization of the mother) and quotes Domitila Barrios de Chungara (1980) who says *machismo* and *feminismo* have been introduced by capitalists. Harrison makes the point that when we examine the chronicles and the codices of the New World, we find evidence where women are valued and equal in the societies of the Andes. I would add myths and ethnographic materials as well.

¹⁶See Waugh 1982, "Marked and Unmarked: A Choice Between Unequals in Semiotic Structure.'

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reality of adolescence described above. The sexual prowess of women is unmarked and male sexuality must be elaborated, or as the girls expressed it, practiced. Female desire and fecundity seem to be *a priori* states, elements of the marked character of the larger category of femaleness. I would also like to suggest that in the poetics of riddles as well as in love songs (waynos), whose themes deal with sexuality, love, and often death, femaleness is the unmarked category and maleness the marked. Mannheim (1985) found that in a corpus of 24 Quechua songs, Mama (mother or ma'am) functioned as the unmarked term and Tayta, father or sir, functioned as the marked term. There were no exceptions to this pattern.

Given the marked character of maleness, reinforced by the poetic and pragmatics of gender during adolescence, it is no surprise that women are considered responsible for fertility and fecundity. For example, a major part of animal fertility rites, the herranza, involves women who have given birth 'laying their hands on' female animals that have not given birth and thus passing the fertility from their bodies to the herds. Adulthood, defined by marriage, is the period of life during which not only the procreative and sexual powers of females become controlled through the practice of arranged marriages, but female power is channeled through women's bodies to ensure fertility of the herds. The sexual freedom that women enjoyed during adolescence as they 'put their lives out to pasture, to play' at sexual competition abruptly comes to an end. Women experienced the pressure from society to marry, to reproduce, and to symbolically insure fertility of the herds which, in turn, consolidates wealth for their kindreds. The markedness of maleness that prevailed since birth is reversed as society gains control over women's sexuality and reproductivity. Female desire, still inextricably linked to fertility and reproduction, is put into service for the reproduction of society.

Adulthood: Controlling Fertility and Reproducing Society

In the rare instance that a man remained single, he was ridiculed as a perpetual child. But a more serious fate awaits a woman who did not marry and did not have children. She was believed to be the wife of a Wamani, one of the mountain deities and the mother of his animal children. Since women were presumed to be fertile and symbolically responsible for fertility and fecundity, sterility was attributed to supernatural causes. The Wamani could seduce young women as they pastured their animals and if a woman remained single and still did not have children as she grew older, the suspicion that she was the wife of a Wamani was confirmed. She was believed to gain secret wealth from her powerful deity-husband and moreover, she represented dangerous sex because of the wrath of the Wamani that would befall any man who pursued her. His herd animals would die, his crops would fail, and he would meet a tragic end, either through illness or accident.

In as much as adulthood presumed reproduction, women and wives were terminologically equivalent (warmi). Men, however, were differentiated as husbands (qosi), and men in general (qari): of course, the rare

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single man was referred to as a child. The terms for mother (mama) and father (tayta) were respectful terms of address (see **figure 1**). Throughout the Andes, reproductivity as a general category of femaleness, is extended to the earth. A woman in Sonqo described Pacha Mama, Earth Mother, to Catherine Allen as a mother nursing potatoes at her breast (Allen 1988: 44-45).

Control over women's fertility and fecundity symbolically began at marriage when the mother of the bride tied a rope around her daughter's waist and lead her to her new home with the groom's parents. The bride's female relatives followed behind her carrying her worldly goods, crying and singing the high-pitched, harawe. Once the bride was delivered to her husband's residence, the couple were carried by two sons-in-law into an inner room like "sacks of potatoes," disrobed and placed under lock and key. These two affines have married into each of the couple's families and they assumed the critical role of tricksters during the wedding ceremonies. Humor and irony are probably the major tropes of all Andean discourse. For example, the two affines (the masas) prepared a bed of stinging nettles and thorns and after disrobing the young pair, obligated them lie down together on their 'nuptial nest of bliss' while shouting jokes about the young man's penis for all to hear. Everyone in the wedding party assumed that the couple have already slept together (unless they are total strangers, see Isbell, In press). The joking carried on until the next morning and centered on whether the groom has satisfied his new wife's sexual appetites. Female desire and male inadequacy were an undercurrent in the first day of the wedding ceremonies. But as the couple are released, the crowd hurls jokes and insults concerning his sexual inadequacy: she, on the other hand, must declare complete satisfaction with his performance.

After the parody of the public consummation of marriage, the ritual became a somber over-determined vision of the wife's responsibility for reproduction. The next morning after receiving her first meal from her mother-in-law, whom she will serve for several years, the bride stuffed her blouse with ears of corn that had been donated by women relatives from both kindreds. The grains of corn then became her two first-born (siblings, not twins, which are a bad omen), boy and a girl. Everyone communally removed the grains of corn from the cob (symbolic birth of the children) and these seeds were destined to become the seed for the couple's first planting. Contact with her body presumably made the corn especially fertile. The next step in the ritual was for the bride to give birth to the two children thereby creating the sister-brother exchange links of the new kindred. These new symbolic children were bundled up and passed among the assembled relatives who recounted what they would teach each child, names were bestowed while people came forward and volunteered to become the children's god-parents. The wedding ritual visually constructed a strong message concerning the responsibility of the bride to give birth to both a female and male child, otherwise society could not reproduce. The marriage ritual creates the image of the bride as a germinator, an image that we will see as a major trope in the mythic texts. For a young woman, her past history of sexual freedom is rewritten as her fertility and sexuality come under social control. One of the greatest disgraces a woman can experience is not to bear children. The other

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great calamity is to commit incest which transforms one into a qarqacha, condemned to roam the earth at night in animal form.

During the planting ceremonies (the yapuy) at the end of August, after the impregnation of Earth Mother by irrigation water (referred to as semen) that originated from high sacred lakes, men assumed the role of symbolic women (warmi) by playing transvestites in a rite of reversal. The (male) warmis planted the plaza, not the fields and not with corn seed, but with the residue from the bottom of brewing pots, (goncho), which is the starter used to make new chicha, the supreme female- produced and distributed gift to deities and humans alike. Since this residue was composed of sprouted corn, everyone was aware that it was sterile, nevertheless, it represented the 'warmis' babies. In this rite of reversal, men parodied in broad strokes of ironic humor the power of reproduction of women and in doing so, I believe, they appropriated a bit of that power for themselves. Significantly, the rite ended with playful battles between women and men in which participants hurled machka, toasted, ground corn that is sprinkled on chicha for important ceremonial occasions. These playful battles, that often erupted in real violence, were also accompanied by a great roar of cacophonous noise produced by four different bands dedicated to different saints playing distinct tunes. The celebration of chaos announced the termination of the most dangerous period of the year, the month of August, when Mother Earth was said to open allowing deities from the underworld to escape and caused havoc. Allen reports that in Sonqo, during the month of August, Mother Earth is so sensitive, that even walking on her can cause disaster ¹⁷ In the department of Ayacucho, this dangerous period of time culminated with the feast of the moon (a female deity), merged with the Christian feast of Santa Rosa on the 30th of August, to ensure the onset of the rains, and to cleanse communities of illness and evil..¹⁸

The tropes of female sensual desire that dominated adolescence were transformed into the tropes of women as germiparity (i.e. the marriage ceremony). Annually during the planting ritual, adult reproductive men 'stole' that reproductive power in an ironic portrayal of 'fertility in reverse' which then culminated in a battle between the sexes that celebrated chaos in the extreme. After this sequence, participants returned to their home communities and began a new agricultural year.

The December solstice was observed in the Chuschi region of Ayacucho with elaborate fertility rituals for llamas and alpacas that took place within the boundaries of communities, not in the high puna, where the

¹⁷See Allen 1988, chapter one.

¹⁸these rituals occur during a calendrically significant period that was celebrated during the reign of the Inka's and probably before. The Inka opened the first fields in the middle of August during the observance of the anti-zenith. Given the importance of rituals that mark femaleness in present day Andean culture during this same period. I would suggest that we look at these relationships in the ethnohistorical sources.

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herds were pastured. Women played a central role in the fertility dance, called the dance of the machu. Women of four age groups participated: small girls of four or five celebrated their first ritual obligation; young girls who were recently initiated as pas_a (sexually active), reproductive adult women, and grandmothers, that is women past menopause. They performed a group dance with a single male dancer who represented a reproductive male llama. The machu was an adult, married man with children, masked in a brown llama skin worn over his head who enacted both animal and human coitus. In the dance, coitus was depicted as herding activities whereby women were said to pursue and capture the male llama. The women surrounded the machu in their colorful, vibrating U-shaped dance formation, thereby symbolizing successful mating which was applauded by the crowd, with comments to the effect--"Now they have mated." (figure xx photos)

A series of maximal contrasts characterized the dance. The women, dressed in new brilliantly colored clothing, carried long poles decorated with circles of colorful ribbons at the top; the male dancer's brown face mask and brown llama hide contrasted sharply with the colorful, U-shaped dance formation as the women enclosed the male. The movements of the women dancers were composed of short jumping hops punctuated by running sprints as they chased the llama and they sing the high-pitched, wordless harawe as they pursue the male. He, on the other hand, danced with large expansive steps and gestures, punctuated with abrupt stops when he would stamp his feet which sounded the bells on his ankles. The music constituted contrasting gender symbolism. The ankle bells worn by the male were accompanied by a clacker -- a wooden instrument held in his hand. The only other music was provided by an old man playing the harp in the low register with sharp, rhythmic percussion. The contrasts in music and dance intensified gender elaboration and highlighted female reproductive powers on a number of semantic levels: The collectivity of females -- herded/captured/copulated with the machu -- the male llama/ human male/old man. In the origin myths to be discussed below, women capture male 'essence' (sperm) by seducing the conquerers and by impounding irrigation water, a trope for semen and sperm. In both the myths and in the rituals just described, women as germinators is the major female trope. Note that in both mythic texts and in ritual contexts described above, the four age classes of women are the predominate actors. The fifth female element is Pacha Mama, the unmarked, all encompassing whole from which all of the others are derived. The ethnographic enactments of female sex and desire excites Mother Earth and ensures fertility. The ritual described above reflect similar functions to that of the 'five-in-one' female of the Huarochir_ Tales.

Gender: Space, Time, and Motion

The spatial/temporal significance of gender is understandable in terms of the general Quechua semantics of motion. In an analysis of the Cuzco dialect, Mannheim (1987:282) sets out fundamental semantic contrasts among three verbs used to denote existence or being: 1) Kay denotes non-locational existence; 2) tiyay -- to exist

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in a location, to reside or to sit, to calm one's spirit or essence, as well as the sedimentation of a liquid. Both terms are linguistically unmarked and therefore contrast to the third term for existence -3) puriy, which Mannheim glosses as "... a form of existence which is kinetic, one which cancels the notion of boundedness and implies either motion or the interaction of parts" (emphasis mine). He correctly takes issue with the usual translation of puriy as 'to travel'. Moreover, he argues that puriy is marked and presupposes the unmarked kay and tiyay. What is significant is that the semantics of the marked term is due to motion and the interaction of parts. Regina Harrison (1989:159- 160) greatly enhances these concepts with examples of verbal metaphors for sexual attraction found in love songs: "Purina embodies notions of activity, motion, sexuality, and existence which go beyond this semantic restrictiveness (of walking and running water- the definition given by Holgu_n). In the songs of the Ecuadoran lowlands, purina carries connotations as a verb which is a metaphor to define existence"(p. 160). I would argue that female tropes of sexuality do indeed define existence long the life course in order to intensify social differentiation. When this happens, the semantics of motion come into play, previous boundedness or constraints are removed and gender concepts are redefined. Life begins in a wet, 'unripe', unmarked state that is female, male differentiation and markedness increases and reaches a climax during adolescence. A reversal occurs during adulthood when female reproductive powers are constrained and put to reproductive purposes. A final reversal of the markedness pattern occurs during old age, which is male in character, as the aged lose their wetness and become chu_u. Death, the necessary rotting of present generations who then move along the rivers of the after-life toward regeneration and into the future, lose specific gender just as dehydrated potatoes lose moisture and become petrified. The petrified dead contribute to the essence of newborns who enter the world, not quite genderless, but as unmarked females and the process of gender differentiation and elaboration begins all over again. Tropes that depict Andean gender formation can best be thought of as a processual movement through a space/time continuum that involves growth/reproduction/death/rotting/petrification -- from wet, unripe infants to reproductive adults then to rotting old age and finally to petrified ancestors. Polarization of the sexes is less evident than 'moments' of gender intensity along a path of differentiation that connect the lived-experiential' world with the supernatural world. I have depicted the path of differentiation in figure 2. The shifts in markedness point to shifts in gender intensity which function to direct and constrain fertility and fecundity. With such a gender ideology, it is therefore logical to have beings such as the waris, androgynous animals who are believed to be progenitors of the herds when in biological reality they are sterile. Waris express a notion of the processes of fertility in perfect balance, femaleness and maleness in one body. Without such balance each sex is potentially dangerous and destructive. Femaleness, in its exuberance for reproduction, would create an ever - pregnant world without the constraining force of male insemination, the moving force of water/semen. Nevertheless, both sexes move along the path of gender differentiation toward the future, and toward petrification and androgyny.

Old Age: A Final Reversal

In the continual ebb and flow of gender intensity throughout the life cycle, old age was said to be like making chu_u, all the moisture leaves the body as the aged alternately rot and desiccate. Death brings final dehydration. Recall the image of Earth Mother nursing potatoes at her breast. Potatoes are said to die when chu_u is produced and likewise the human dead are said to be chu_u.¹⁹ Both sexes experience this process of desiccation equally and the vegetative analogy pertains -- from birth (unripe) to death (rotted and dehydrated), but storable for future use and as Allen (1988:fn.1, pg. 273) insists, the dead/chu_u exist in an ambiguous life-in-death state. The rotting dead fertilize crops and contribute to future generations and the mummified dead/chu_u/petrified forms embody the regenerative process of renewal. In my discussion of the origin myths, recall the link between the role of mummies, mallquis, as female germiparity and petrified huacas, stone phalluses, constituted an androgynous double representing the dead whose role as an androgynous progenitor was a major Andean gender concept that suffered drastic transformation with the destruction of the mallquis and huacas. The best ethnographic evidence for what might be thought of as what was left after the massive destruction of huacas comes from Allen's work (1982) in which she describes the engaychus, small stones, which like the dead, have a male inseminating function, must be cared for and fed.

While the sexes experience similar fates in old age and death, terms of reference retain the asymmetry that was prevalent during reproductive years: the term for old woman is paya, and as described above, machu means male in the general sense, old man, as well as male animal. I think that the term implies reproductivity and I have heard abundant stories of old men's virility. Paya respectfully refers to old women after menopause. The social strictures on old women were removed once they were no longer reproductive and they enjoyed greater freedom of behavior. For example, old women directed exceedingly ribald jokes to their younger male relatives and even pinched and fondled the genitalia of young visiting North American male students. Nevertheless, this freedom had a price and aged women were feared and considered potentially evil. Stories about witches as old hags who eat children are common throughout the Andes.²⁰ It seems that the rotten effects of death are already present in the aged and even though old women were once again free to express their sexual desires; such desires were conceived as potentially cannibalistic. The image of an old, cannibalistic hag with

¹⁹Allen's analysis of the metaphorical extensions of chu_u have been fundamental to my understanding of the relationship between life and death and the continual transformation of gender. As Allen says (1988:16 and fn. 1 on page 237) "Ch'u_o is a kind of dehydrated potato that can be stored for long periods. It has a shriveled, mummified appearance and is believed by the *Runakuna* to exist in an ambiguous life-in-death state of being." Also see Allen 1982.

²⁰Howard-Malverde (1981) has published and analyzed such imagery from the oral traditions of Peru and Ecuador.

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stringy hair is a powerful one. An old woman complained to me that the greatest cost of drying up in old age was the loss of beautiful hair. She grasped her skinny braids between her hands to show me how her hair had lost its luster and beauty. It is significant that death rituals included cutting the hair of the relatives of the deceased and burning it as an offering to the deities after the corpse had been returned to the Earth Mother, to Pacha Mama, hopefully, people say, to rot and fertilize future crops. As Allen (1988) and Bouysse and Harris (1987) have shown, Earth Mother is both benevolent and evil: she is the symbol of fecundity and fertility, but the earth also has a voracious appetite and must be continually 'fed.'²¹

Rotten Death and The Afterlife: A Journey Toward Petrification and Androgyny

I would like to offer a hypothetical model of the process of gender transformation after death. My own ethnography and the details of other researchers suggest the following schema to me. Once freed of the path of life, gender takes on different significance. In the region of Ayacucho, the recently deceased continue to have personal identities, but for no longer than a year, then they move toward a remote category of ancestor that I argue is androgynous. In contrast, localized sacred places such as mountains, lakes, small hills have personalities and are of both sexes. Allen (1988) reports a pattern whereby the highest mountains are attributed with maleness and low hillocks with femaleness. However, there is evidence in the ethnographic literature for androgynous mountains and deities (Martinez this volume, Pease 1978) These sacred places are thought of as animate participants in the daily activities of the living. They are in the here and now -- the kay pacha. In contrast, as ancestors and deities move away from the here and now, or literally away from this place and this time, specific identity is lost but their power over fertility increases. In the Ayacucho region, the recent dead are almas, and it is best to bid them farewell as soon as possible. The first anniversary of their death should dispatch them from the world of the living. After they are dispatched, the dead begin a journey toward androgyny as they become part of a collectivity of ancestors, the gentiles and finally, the very remote mallquis (or mallkis) which also signifies young sapling or new growth. They are simultaneously distant as they move away from the here and now and close to the future as they contribute to unborn generations. Mallquis, the mummies that were revered by Andean peoples represented the feminine force of germination of future generations, moreover, they were the other half of an androgynous double, the male phallic inseminating force, the huacas, that Duviols (1976) argues was critical to Andean cosmology. As ancestors move in the river of the afterlife toward the future, they lose specific gender and become androgynous and thereby contribute greatly to the fertility of future

²¹it seems to me that her depiction of Pacha Mama is unmarked and Pacha Tira is marked. However, Allen does not use these terms, nor does Bouysse and Harris (1987). It seems to me that youth and aging/wetness and dryness are also part of the symbolic complex of Pacha Mama.

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generations. As androgynous entities, they become the nexus in the regenerative process of life, connecting the past and future.²²

The dynamics of the gender motion along the life cycle, through the doorway of death and into the after-life is demonstrable in a drawing produced by a Quechua-speaking boy (figure x) in the village of Chuschi, department of Ayacucho in the mid-1970's. He has drawn the Gentiles (non-Christian ancestors) as skulls inside of a sacred lake, and then attempted to explain them in non-polarized gender terms: they were perhaps both or neither male nor female, he said. More importantly, they constrain the fertility and fecundity of femaleness, the sacred lake (as a womb), which would overflow, if not channeled into a male irrigation system (semen) which impregnates Earth Mother. The contiguity of the two I take as an expression of androgyny, the dry skulls, the petrified ancestors, are the 'seeds' of the future. In the Huarochir_ tales, which I will discuss in detail below, Salomon (1991:16) characterizes the cycle of life depicted in the myths as similar to those described by Allen (1982) for the contemporary people of Sonqo in the department of Cuzco. Salomon writes: "Humans like all others emerge fat and wet, but at the end of life their dried husk containing the potential for future life goes as a mummified ancestor (mallqui) back to the earth ... a dry seedlike being that emerges from the dead human husk - a fly- is the living residue of a dead generation." Once the seeds are returned to the earth, the cycle of growth begins again. Rasnake (this volume) describes the 'collective' dead among the Yura of Bolivia which also have fecundating powers.

I find extremely compelling Duviols (1976) argument that after death, a 'double' comprised of a mummy (mallqui -female/germinating) and a stone (huaca or huanca-male/ phallic/inseminator) which became the manifestation of important personages. The mummy was clothed, fed and venerated and the stone became the cult object of the group associated with the dead person. The stone was generally kept above ground and the mummy was returned to the earth, to a pacarina, a place of emergence, regeneration or birth usually a cave, a river or a lake. Both the mallqui and the huaca were imbued with camay, the energizing force essential to life and reoccurring cycles of regeneration. Duviols notes that a huaca was called the 'brother' of a dead apical hero/ancestor. But there is no mention of a parallel kinship term for mallqui, which would be sister. If the marked/unmarked gender paradigm that I outlined above were operative, sister or mother, as a term for a germinating force, would have been the unmarked category and therefore unnamed. Duviols concludes with a planting and growth analogy whereby the 'germinating seed, the mallqui, submerged in a cave, lake or river

²²similar notions of dynamic movement of ancestors in a temporal/spatial dimension appears to be present in Bolivia among the Aymara (see Harris 1980m, among the Bolivian Quechua, see Rasnake, this volume. In Cuzco there are ancestors who are called *machus* or *machulas*, who appear to be mostly male and malevolent (see Allen 1988:56-57). Another class are the *chullpas*, associated with the Inka storage houses. Urton (personal communication) thinks both *machus* and *chullpas* are spirits that live in the earth. This would not necessarily be contradictory with my interpretation.

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begins the cycle of creation whereby the emergent actors in a new world (or pacha) are eventually transformed into stone and 'seed.' The cycles continue. For example, when conquering heroes roam the land, accompanied by the migration of their huacas (stones/phallic representations of their ancestors/ brothers) and the re-submergence of their mallquis (mummies /germinating seeds/sisters ?). New ages (pachas as time/space) are 'planted and grown' in successive cycles of regeneration. This growth analogy is consistent with that of contemporary Andean conceptualizations of gender functions and helps us to understand the dynamics of gender through life and after death.

PART I. GENDER TROPES IN ANDEAN ORIGIN MYTHS

The text I will analyze is: The Huarochir Manuscript: A Testament of Ancient and Colonial Andean Religion which has been translated into English by Salomon and Urioste (1991) and was previously translated by Taylor into French (1980) and into Spanish under the title, Ritos y Tradiciones de Huarochir del Siglo XVII (1987). The latter has a biographical essay on Francisco de Avila by Antonio Acosta (1987).²³

By and large, the anthropological interpretations of Andean origin myths have been from a male perspective focusing on conquest of local ethnicities and the establishment of group identity usually seen as patrilineal, patriarchal, or at least male-focused social groups (Salomon and Urioste 1991, Taylor 1974-76, Urton 1990, Urbano 1981, Zuidema 1987). The publications that concentrate on females in Andean ethnohistory and especially in myths are few (Lyons 1978, Hocquenghem 1986, Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1983, and Silverblatt's work mentioned above). I have especially drawn on three other works. Duviols (1976-78) provided me with a possible model of androgyny in relation to the dominate trope of vegetative growth discussed in the introduction. Alaperrine-Bouyer (1987) has given a careful reading to the Huarochir_ manuscript attending to female personages and their symbolic functions. While she does not read evidence for androgyny in the texts, she concludes that the exuberant sexuality of Chaupi _amca, sister to the conquering hero, Paria Caca, establishes a new order whereby her sexual powers are celebrated equally along with the destructive powers of her brother. The two huacas are essential to one another: one animates women and the other men. Zuidema's analysis of 'sister' as an abstract kin category in Inca Civilization in Cuzco (1990) has provided insights concerning this trope of contiguity in the Huarochir_ tales.²⁴

Freudian psycho-historical analyses of Andean myths have privileged a male point of view with particular emphasis on the oedipal complex (Hern_nde z et. al. 1987, Lemlij and Millones eds. 1991). Given

²³Unless otherwise specified, I have used the translation of Salomon and Urioste, which has retained its beautiful strangeness from the Quechua. Other translations consulted are: Taylor 1980 and Arguedas and Duviols 1966.

²⁴In an earlier version of this paper, I included an interpretation of Betanzos' 1551 version of the Ayar myths, but in order to cut the length of this publication, I have deleted it from the present work. I will return to these texts in a future work because they represent an important incidence of masculination of myths, which is reinforced by analyses such as those by Hern_nde z et. al. 1987, Lemlij and Millones 1991, Urton 1990, and Urbano 1981.

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their traditional Freudian interpretations, these analyses likewise overlook the potentiality of interpreting gender symbolism from a female perspective. I will approach the Huarochir_ myths from a feminist perspective, using the framework for interpretation set out in the introduction and develop an argument concerning androgyny and the female functions that I see expressed in the texts. My analysis should be read in dialogue with the above mentioned male-focused sources. I believe that these different readings of the myths reflect the interpretive productivity that is integral to such texts. However, in regard to Andean mythology, we have thus far heard male voices with only whispers from the very powerful female voices present in Andean texts. The feminist researchers discussed above stand on the frontiers of new interpretations and it is to that body of literature that I offer this current work.

Myths, as told in their cultural contexts, embody numerous levels of interpretations that relate experientially to different segments of society. For example, an obvious point that is often overlooked is that a six year-old boy or girl will not hear aspects of a myth that are important to a sixty-year old man or woman because the two opposing age groups bring different interpretative skills and experiences to the myth. Children begin their acquisition of the language of tropes through participation in rituals and narrative practices and arrive at an interpretive capacity in their old age having constructed an edifice of polytrophy (Friedrich 1986) built from a life-time of symbolic practices. I believe that the messages communicated in myths (and other poetic forms) are quite distinct for listeners of differing sex and age. Furthermore, the paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures of myths (Turner 1985), the scaffolding upon which the edifice of polytrophy is built, are perhaps distinct for males and females in any given culture. To unravel the puzzle of gender then, the study of tropes in mythology would ideally include interpretations from different sexes and ages.²⁵ Friedrich (1986:135-52 and 1990:24-26) has argued for the role of chaos as an element in linguistic creativity. Such creativity is put to excellent use in the cultural construction of gender differences. What appears to contemporary readers to be chaotic confusion in mythic texts may reflect the productivity of ambiguity. For example, the earliest origin myths under consideration, the Huarochir_ Tales, do not begin with creation scenes but rather with heroines and heroes who are 'five in one' characters in the myths. The ambiguity of their identities is critical to the construction of the gender schema.

Unfortunately, the texts we are dealing with are far removed from the living cultures studied by ethnographers. If we could witness the oral tradition in action we could examine how tropes interact with one another as well as with changing cultural values. If we could study the myths in their cultural context we would

²⁵In a study of Chuschino children's construction of gender, I found this to be the case (Isbell n.d.). The development of gender ideology in boys and girls differed greatly from one another from ages five through twelve with contrasting realities as experiential foci. Girls by the age of 10-12 connected marriage and death whereas boys of the same age concentrated on confronting the outside world through conflict and violence.

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be able to understand the process by which ambiguity contributes to the construction of gender schema. Moreover, the texts under consideration were told by subjugated parishioners who were under the dominion of Spanish priests whose explicit goals were to extirpate what they considered to be idolatrous religious practices and to destroy the huacas and mallquis whose origin, lives, and veneration the myths describe. Even with these unfavorable conditions for a study of the Feminine Symbolic, I find a wealth of gender tropes that point to pre-conquest concepts of androgyny and symbolic functions of female entities.

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Episodes from Huarochir : The Functions of 'Sister'

I'll begin my examination of the myths at the end of the collection, Chapter 31, (see the appendix for the full text in Quechua with an English translation). This episode tells of the conquest of the aboriginal people, the Yunca, who lived happily (without conflict) with an abundance of water which they drew from Yansa lake in the upper reaches of the Lurin River valley. The Yunca, some said, originated from the quinoa plant while their conquerers, the Concha, the last and least prestigious of Pariacaca's children (sec. 441), were born out of the interior of the earth at Yauri Llanca as five brothers accompanied by one sister. As Salomon and Urioste explain (footnote 758), the passage (sec. 394) describing the birth of the five-part hero(es) "... can be read to mean that a stone with a helmet was born along with, but separately from, the men." In Quechua, Concha can be translated as child of a man's sister (niece or nephew) and the myth is clearly relating the establishment of an agnatic line through the descendants of the original sister who marries a local boy. On their journey, two of the five brothers lag behind and miss the trail but three proceed forward carrying the stone helmet with which they conquer the Yunca village and renamed it Concha (chapter 31, sec. 389, 390). When the three brothers arrived at the spring which feeds Lake Yansa, (called 'black spring'), all they had to do was show the Yunca the helmet and - "they died instantly" (sec. 395).

The oldest brother, Llacsa Misa, is said to have been accompanied by his sister, Cuno Cuyo, but unlike the Ayar brothers' conquest of the Cuzco valley, there is no mention that the two siblings become man and wife; rather, Cuno Cuyo marries a boy (one has the impression that she is much older than he) whom Llacsa Misa had saved from his brothers' wrath during the conquest (sec. 400- 403) and adopted. The boy, Yasali, serves Llacsa Misa as his llama herder and it is in that capacity that he marries Cuno Cuyo, which perhaps is significant given the association with sexuality and herding in modern Andean cultural contexts, which will be discussed in the second half of this paper. As a grown man, Cuno Cuyo's husband assumes the role of hereditary priest (yanca) of her kin group, the Conchas, serving Uma Pacha, the huaca that had come from Yauri Llanca (sec. 403). Salomon and Urioste suggest that Uma (from the Jaqi word for water) and Pacha (earth) are possibly terms used for general *sacra* (note 623). Nevertheless, the Uma Pacha venerated by Yasali, is probably the huaca born with a stone helmet as it is specifically referred to as coming from the conchas' place of origin. Therefore, the survivor of the conquest, Yasali, not only marries the Conchas' only sister, he also appropriates their huaca and assumes the role of hereditary priest. It is noteworthy that all of Llacsa Misa's offspring become extinct (sec.443) and Cuno Cuyo and Yasali's children marry the descendants of one of the two 'lost' Concha brothers, Hualla, who returns after a long time. Without the sister's marriage to a local boy and the endogamous first-cousin marriages of her descendants with her own kin group create the class of 'nephews,' the Concha yumay (literally sperm - see Salomon and Urioste 1990: 19) would have become extinct. The creation of this descent line through a sister in

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an agnatic system results in the institution of a subordinate category of descent which Zuidema (1987 and 1990: 28-33) argues refers to younger son as opposed to older son in an hierarchy of kin that is fundamental to understanding Inka kinship. He constructs a model (pg. 29-30) in which "... each younger brother must in turn find himself in the position of "sister" of his own older brother." Sister, then becomes a trope that implies symmetry and hierarchy at the same time. We can see the same relations in the text of chapter 31 of the Huarochir_ tales but another process also occurs.

In sec. 444, the story teller relates that the modern descendants of the sister's children's marriages (the conchas - nieces and nephews as a birth group, yuriy) have entered into the Llacsá Misa position. Therefore he says, the people called Hualla don't exist any more. At this point in the myth, both genealogical and chronological distances are reduced as the living Conchas, the yumay, line or 'sperm' become identified as the conchas - the yuriy or birth group of nieces and nephews as a marriage class take the apical ancestor's 'position' and the yumay (sperm) is continued by the actions of the yuriy (birth group) in relation to the apical ancestor. 'Sister' then, is a major trope of contiguity and at the same time a trope that collapses genealogical and chronological distance to return to an apical position in order to begin the cycle over again. "Sister' as a gender category, appears to be a major 'operator' or germiparity in much the same way the mummified remains, the mallqui is metaphorically a 'seed.' We have evidence that the stone manifestations of the dead, huacas, were referred to as brothers of the living, Zuidema (1990:38) declares that the mummies defined the relations between the living and the huacas. Likewise, in the Huarochir_ tales, 'sister' defines the relations between the local conquered peoples and her brothers.

Zuidema's (1987:3) interpretation of this myth of the creation of the "nieces and nephews" (concha) is that they were instituted to signify the subordinate category within the six ayllus of the territory even though they were the conquerers. Their arrival on the scene not only established social hierarchy, with the concha on the bottom, but also instituted the class of priests, the Yanca, (of whom Yasali was the first) who were in charge of regulating the water that came from the high puna during the month of March, the end of the rainy season, and who, during the rest of the year, distributed irrigation water to the Concha ethnic group.

I agree with Zuidema's interpretation;²⁶ however, the text of sec. 434 of chapter 31 says that the Yanca priests were dragged by the people to the lake in the middle of the night if there was danger of the lake breaking

²⁶I had not read Zuidema's 1987 paper until he brought it to my attention when I read this section of the present work at the University of Illinois. We had essentially come to the same conclusion concerning the symbolic function of concha (nieces and nephews) which is not surprising because his 1990 book, The Incas of Cuzco, was an important source for my own reading of this segment of the Huarochir_ Tales. In the 1987 piece, he also analyzes chapter 31 from the perspective of the establishment of social hierarchy. But again, he does not focus on the feminine in the myths.

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the dam. While they were clearly privileged and were given maize as a tribute (in fact they were not allowed to engage in agricultural activities), they were in the service of the Concha people and in this regard the priests were 'the concha to the Concha' the subordinates to the subordinates of the valley. The priests were also in charge of solar observations which announced the appropriate times to perform rituals to Chaupi _amca and Paria Caca. Zuidema (1987) explores the connection between sexual abstinence, agriculture and irrigation water by associating the priests with newly married men who were enjoined to remain abstinent for one year. It is significant that the huacsas, the young men who performed dances enacting the lives of the huacas, were also said to remain abstinent during their initiation period. Nevertheless, Zuidema does not discuss the fact that the dances for Chaupi _amca were especially erotic, designed to sexually excite her, whereas the dances performed for Paria Caca were marathons, but not described as erotic. Chapter 9, sec. 123 reads:

"The huacsas reportedly performed this dance with absolutely no interruption. If someone who stops dancing ever happens to die, people comment about him, "He died because of the fault he committed."

I will explore these differences in representation of sexual desire as I focus on the 'Feminine Symbolic.' One of the most remarkable examples of female desire and sexual power is the following episode, which has been ignored by scholars thus far.

The Woman Who Gives Birth to Her Own Husband, a Huaca

In chapter 31 Collquiri, a Yunca huaca, desires a woman very badly. He has searched all over in vain when the trickster, Cuni Raya, says to him: "Hey she's right here, right nearby, your woman!" (sec.408) The lonely huaca, Collquiri, sees a beautiful woman, Capyama, dancing majestically and decides that she will be his wife. He sends one of his servants to tell her a lie to entice her to him. She is told that one of her llamas has given birth. She brings a golden drum, two small coca bags hidden in her bosom, and a long-necked chicha jar (sec.411). He turns himself in a callcallo (probably a grasshopper) and teases her into a chase. She finally succeeds in catching him whereby she stuffs the grasshopper into her dress, spilling her chicha as she does so. The spill immediately turns into a spring. (sec. 412-414).

The grasshopper grows large inside her belly as she becomes pregnant with her own husband. She gives birth to a handsome youth, not a baby, and he greets her with: "Sister, I'm the one you stuck into your dress. What can we do about it now? It was I who sent for you." According to the male teller of the tale, she immediately falls in love with him; they have sex and he takes her home to Yansa lake (sec. 415-416). I wonder if women told a different version of the myth that has not come down to us historically. According to version we have, a man informs Capyama's relatives that she has turned into a high priestess and they demand that Collquiri

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return her but he pleads with his wife's kin addressing them as fathers and brothers. Collquiri promises to give them anything they want but they refuse his entreaties saying they want their sister back." Capyama refuses to leave her husband (sec.419). What I find significant about this segment of the myth is that a Yunca woman pursues and catches her husband (a huaca in the form of a grasshopper), stuffs him in her dress where her two coca bags are hidden, becomes pregnant and gives birth to her future husband. Comparing the myth to the ethnographic materials I will present in the second part of this analysis, we find symbolic birth similar to that described in ethnographic, contemporary marriages. One important difference prevails however, her offspring is her son/husband. One interpretation of this segment of the myth could be that it is depicting extreme endogamy - a woman gives birth to her own husband, who later establishes the control of water (male sexuality/irrigation water/semen). The visual image of the items she carries with her -- her small round drum (symbolically a womb) the two coca bags and the grasshopper (a phallus) suggest sexual coitus. Later in the myth we learn that women play a important role in impounding irrigation water and preventing floods. Symbolically, she then is the 'mother/wife' of control of male sexuality. I think this is one of the major female function in the myths that I have examined. On another level the mother/wife is incorporating her grasshopper/son/husband into her body and thereby creating a powerful synecdoche, which I interpret as an expression of mother/wife /sister /daughter as the larger, global, unmarked category of which son/husband/brother becomes literally a part. Oddly enough, I don't find within the symbolic complex the expression of father. Her brothers and father are presented as society's control, which she disobeys.

Looking back on the rituals that I studied in the department of Ayacucho, Peru, I see a number of similarities. For example, during the fertility rituals celebrated during the December Solstice women pursued a single male figure, the machu, and incorporated him into their collective body represented by a vibrating U - shaped dance formation made up of wives/mothers/sisters and daughters. The ritual enactment of copulation insured the birth of animals. Some weeks later in the puna, animals were tied together 'belly to belly' to enact human coitus. The bodies of the animals became a ritual table upon which women performed rituals to insure human and animal fertility and fecundity. As I think about the role of women during all fertility rituals several symbolic complexes were always evident: drums, the only instrument played by women (remember that Capyama brought a golden drum on her journey). Women made and served chicha and offered coca to Pacha Mama and other *sacra* during various fertility rites. Control over fertility and fecundity was a major female function as well. When these fertility rites were performed for herds, women passed fertility from their bodies to the female animals that have not given birth. Moreover, during agricultural rituals, women served coca and chicha (as well as the Spanish-introduced cane alcohol, trago) to all of the significant sacred places, clearly huacas, embodiments of mythical personages similar to those discussed in the myths. These activities insured abundant crops and animal fertility. Now that I look for female functions and tropes of sexuality and reproduction, I realize that women (not men) poured libations on all of the sacred places that defined the

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productive zones of the environment (Isbell 1985). We might say women reaffirmed the sacred places in the environment in such a way to ensure the 'unmarkedness' of femaleness as a more inclusive category that insures fertility and fecundity. They also served the male authorities, who passed vast quantities of chicha through their own bodies and return it to the earth in the form of urine.

To return to our mythic texts: After Capiyama's kin refuse the luxuries Collquiri offers, he says he will give them the 'Goesunder' and Capiyama's kin are so curious that they accept and indeed Collquiri "Goes Under." He goes underground and when he emerges to the surface to see how far he has traveled, a spring bursts forth "like a fountain" (Sec. 422). He plugs it up with some copper and emerges above the village which creates the spring that bears Capiyama's name. Too much water gushes forth from the spring and carries away the quinoa (remember that quinoa and oca were spread out to dry in the sun). Below the villagers are awash in water and shout repeatedly to Collquiri: "Hey, Collquiri! Hold back on the water!" (sec.425) "Plug it up!!" (sec. 426) He does so with a blanket (or with lead, the translation is not clear) which creates numerous springs all over the district. Finally, Collquiri jumps in the spring himself and stops the flow somewhat and until today the spring passes through his cloak (sec. 427).

The water problem is not solved however, and his antics disrupt the flow of water to the Concha people and to correct this, he institutes a system of sluices on the lake which regulates water distribution with Llacsá Misa's "sperm" (line) in charge. Llacsá Misa is still alive when these episodes occur and the text says: "All of Llacsá Misa's descendants followed each other in the exact same custom and continue it even now" (sec. 432). What is clear is that the descendants of Cuno Cuyo and Yasali (the concha - the nieces and nephews) become the water priests, because as was mentioned above, Llacsá Misa's descendants become extinct.

In the descriptions of the water rituals, a distinction is made between the ritual to release the irrigation water and the ritual to impound it. In both instances all of the Concha people gather at Lake Yansa in March under the direction of the hereditary priest, the yanca, the position that Yasali, Cuno Cuyo's Yunca husband assumed. The text reads: "As we said before, the huacasas (appointed celebrate male initiates who danced impersonations of the huacas' lives) went to Yansa lake both to impound and to release the waters. To impound the water all the people went out, too. As soon as they arrived, the women deposited their coca, each one in her own right, and likewise their maize beer each in her own right" (sec. 437). The text goes on to describe the offerings that are made to the lake which in reality the yanca received. Salomon and Urioste interpret this section as meaning that the women are asserting "... a household-level right to access to water. The female ritual role as receiver of water rights parallels the female role of earth as water-receiving huacas in the myths" (note 811). I interpret the section as saying that women had the power to impound the water. Releasing the water is described later in the text (sec. 440). "When it was time to release the water, people

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always went five times accompanied by two or three huacas, the young celibate initiates who danced the huacas lives. Just before this, a man and a woman would enter a fairly large field and bring maize beer there in a big jug, and guinea pigs, two or three of them, and coca leaf. Having worshiped with these offerings, they'd release the water." Note that the ritual of releasing the water involves a man and a woman making offerings in a field to be irrigated, but women solely have the obligation to impound water (excessive male sexuality) by depositing their coca bags. Male celibacy is represented in both rituals by the young male dancers impersonations of the huacas's lives. Later in the text we learn that their dances to excite Chaupi _amca, the principal heroine of the tales, are highly erotic.

The story of Collquiri creating too many springs and flooding his affine's lands which in turn results in depriving the Conchas, the group dedicated to the care of his lake, of their water is on one level an allegory of unbalanced male sexuality (Salomon interpretation is uncontrolled lust) which must be corrected through the institution of a system of water distribution in which both women and men play important roles. The male descendants of the sole sister of the original conquering brothers, Cuno Cuyo, and her young conquered husband, become the hereditary priests in charge of water distribution and rituals: women become the ritual actors who impound the water with offerings of coca and chicha which are two of the three items that Capyama (the huaca Collquiri's wife/mother) brought with her on her journey to meet him. The other object she brought was a small golden drum. There is no mention of a drum in the description of the ritual, but in section 450 an aside is made by the narrator who comments that women beat drums in the rituals of his day whereas in ancient times, he says, men played them. In my ethnographic present (1970's), women played small drums at fertility rituals.

In the introduction, Salomon (pg. 9-10) analyses gender relations in the myth in the following manner: flooding represents Collquiri's destructive lust and controlled irrigation represents productive marriage alliances. He proposes a dichotomy between male/ water huacas and female/ earth huacas, which I believe is correct only in part. Women clearly have the power and the ritual obligation to impound water to prevent flood (excessive male sexuality), whereas, a man and woman (probably a married couple or a brother and sister) perform a ritual prior to the release of irrigation water. Without female control of male excessiveness, neither irrigation nor productive marriages could result. Salomon proposes that:

In sum, the gender mythology of Huarochir_, though centered on an idealized complementarity, is at the same time emphatically a conflict model of society. It envisions every complementarity, whether marital, ritual, ecological, or political, as shadowed by submerged conflicts that had to be repressed in order to institute it. The inseparability of complementarity from conflict is implied to be a motor force in the mutability (what we would call the historicity) of west Andean society.

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I agree that every complementarity is inseparable from conflict, but I believe that Salomon has neglected to account for the symbolic power of female entities in the myths to submerge, or in this case to impound, excessive male sexuality (flooding), which as the tale relates, leads to conflicts. From my reading there appears to be a conflict between the male line, called "sperm" (yumay) and the birth group (yuriy) whose core is a brother/sister pair. While the brother's marriage and progeny create the "sperm" line, translated by Salomon and Urioste as patrilineage, the sister's marriage to a conquered foreigner creates hierarchy, differentiation and ordered society. It is notable that her descendants are not destroyed but rather take the place of her brother's "sperm" or line which becomes extinct. Is this perhaps a cautionary tale about the reproduction of society that says sisters are essential? In addition, the myth seems to be saying that the constraint on the excessive sexuality of men by women is fundamental to social order. A lot has been written about society's control over the dangerousness of female sexuality and indeed, that notion was a major force in the conquest by the Spanish of the New World.

The myths are replete with stories of Yunca women seducing Paria Caca, his brothers, or his sons in order to secure water, or to impede the advance of the conquest. Chapter 6 and 7 are good examples: The story begins with Paria Caca searching for his arch enemy, the child-eating Huallallo Caruincho, who in his time ordained that every couple should have only two children: one for his consumption and one for the parents to raise (Chapter 1, sec. 1-4). Disguised as a friendless stranger, Paria Caca arrives at a village in the midst of the celebration of an important festival. Only one woman takes notice of him and offers him food and drink. In revenge, he destroys the community by sending a torrential rainstorm to wash them into the sea. However, he forewarns the generous woman and she saves her children and her brothers. The text doesn't mention her husband nor her affines but note that she saves her birth group (Yuriy) as well as her descendants.

The gushing waters create the topography of Huarochiri (Sec. 76-80) and Paria Caca crosses the river into another ethnic groups' territory where he meets "a really beautiful woman" (sec. 82) -- Chuqui Suso, who is crying while watering her dessicated maize plants. He addresses her as sister and after listening to her tale of woe about the lack of irrigation water, he promises to give her abundant water from a nearby pond if she will sleep with him. She cleverly demands that he "Get the water flowing first" (Sec. 84). He does so but she withholds her sexual favors and entices him to use his powers to lay a long canal from the river. With the help of all kinds of animals he completes the watercourse and again pleads, "Let's sleep together!" But Chuqui Suso responds, "Let's climb to a high ledge. There we'll sleep together," which they do and Chuqui Suso says: "Right in this canal of mine, that's where I'll stay!"

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In the scenes describing sexual acts, the narrator speaks in the actors' voices so that dialogue appears to be directly associated with sex. The narrator then assumes his own voice to relate that Chuqui Suso turned to stone and is visible at the mouth of her canal (Sec. 89-90). Chapter 7 begins by placing Chuqui Suso within a 'sperm line' and describes how people went to her dwelling bringing offerings of chicha, llamas, and guinea pigs to worship the 'demon woman.' Salomon and Urioste (fn 164, pg. 91), citing the work of Duviols (1978), point out that supay - which was translated by clergymen as demon, could have retained its older Andean meaning of "...shade or light, volatile part of a living being." Every huaca and mallqui, the androgenous duality of a living being, probably also had 'supay', another duality represented as shade and light. An interesting issue is whether shade and light as the volatile part of a living being were gendered as well. In describing the annual rituals and dances to the various huacas, (chapter 9, sec. 117-119) the priests were said to observe the shadow cast on a calibrated wall. When the sun hits the wall, the text says, the Yanca priests command the people to race to Paria Caca mountain driving their llamas before them. Likewise, the Yanca officiated at the celebrations for Chaupi _amca and Chuqui Suso, calculating the day by the same means.²⁷ I wonder whether the interplay of shadow and light (as supay) might have represented the gendered duality and volatile part of the heroes and heroines being venerated.

Salomon and Urioste also discuss the margin note (fn. 156, chapter 6) in which the speaker insists that the trickster figure, Cuni Raya, was also frozen to stone in another canal above Chuqui Suso's. Does this mean that Cuni Raya, the coastal creator of irrigation is associated with Chuqui Suso and her people? In Chapter 14, we learn that some people say that Paria Caca is Cuni Raya's son, (Sec. 370) but then throughout the myths kinship relationships are continually collapsed into brother/sister or parent/child relationships. The frustration of the reader is shared by the listener of the tales (perhaps Avila) who attempts to unravel the tangle of relationships of the five-in-one heroines and heroes. For example, in Chapter 12, one of Chuqui Suso's sister's seduces Paria Caca's strongest son by showing him her vulva and breasts and successfully halting the advance of the conquest. Again, the genealogical relationships are not clear, but the power of local women to manipulate the conquerers is a recurrent theme.²⁸ Chuqui Suso, the object of veneration during the May canal cleaning ceremonies, was represented by a woman distributing maize beer and toasted maize from a large gold or silver jar to everyone in rank order, saying: "This is our mother's beer!" (Sec. 93). This is not a straight forward symbolic structure involving female/land and male/water huacas in these tales, but rather one of

²⁷For an explanation of Inka astronomical practices, see Zuidema 1990, chapters 4 and 5. For an excellent ethnographic study of astronomy in the Andes see Urton 1981. Also relevant is the collection edited by Aveni and Urton 1982. In that volume see B. J. Isbell "Culture Confronts Nature in the Dialectical World of the Tropics." For further arguments concerning the relationship between light, shadow and gender see Isbell, "The Shadow of Time." n.d.

²⁸Zuidema (1987:6) equates Chuqui Suso with Chaupi _amca and argues that this multiple huaca was the ancestress that gave people maize.

dynamic transformation from the world of the huacas into the world of the living with female actors playing a major role in animating these transformations, actualized generally through symbolic sex.

Chaupi _amca: The Five-Part Reproducer of Society

The major heroine in the Huarochir_ tales is Chaupi _amca, a woman whose five-fold person is described at times as five sisters (Chapter 10) and at other times as one woman. She is not only said to be Pacha Camac's wife, but the conquered aboriginal people also claim that Chaupi _amca and Paria Caca were the children of the Sun. In Chapter 10, the text reads: "She was Paria Caca's sister." And she herself used to say, "Paria Caca is my brother"(Sec. 143). In Chapter 5, she becomes his daughter-in-law. Salomon and Urioste (Chapter 10, note 286) interpret her multifold identity as pertaining to an ancient Yunca pantheon united in a fraternal relationship with a male newcomer from the highlands, Paria Caca, which thereby establishes a society that is 'one family'. They cite Chapter 9, sec. 116 which they interpret as a mandate for the conquered Yunca descent groups to be "... incorporated into the role of wives and wife-givers, and their major huacas as the 'sisters' and 'wives' of male huacas from the Paria Caca kindred." This section details the law set forth by Paria Caca which actually reads: "We are all of one birth or birthing group," in Quechua, huc yuric canchic (as Salomon and Urioste point out yuric, is the agentive form). 'Birthing group', I take to mean the current reproducers of society. From my reading, the myths do not mandate the creation of straight-forward exchange between conquering males and subordinate females creating patrilineages; rather they tell of the conflicts and paradoxes of sex and procreation whereby continuity of 'birthing groups' is achieved through a number of manipulations of genealogy, including the possibility of descendants of a local conquered male replacing the patilineal 'sperm' in a restructuring of history (as occurred in Chapter 31). Remember that none of the descendants of the conquering brothers survived. Cuno Cuyo, the sole sister, becomes the ancestress of the 'sperm' line through a husband, Yasali, who is subordinate in all senses; he is younger, an orphan and of the conquered. They establish the new birthing group of the Concha ethnic group and their descendants become the water priests. It is through the sister, that a new society, new hierarchy, and new temporal order are established.

In Chapter 10, Chaupi _amca is the eldest of five sisters and also co-terminous with Mama _amca who appeared in Chapter 8 as the companion of the child-eating deity of fire, Huallallo Caruincho, conquered by Paria Caca with hail and floods. When Mana _amca is expelled into the sea by Paria Caca, Chaupi _amca's identity as destroyer is literally submerged and her multifold identity focuses on sex and procreation. Four of her five functions remain: mother, wife, sister, and daughter/daughter-in-law, the elements out of which hierarchy is constructed in the new world order. The fifth and necessary function, that of destroyer, exists as a cataclysmic potential such as tidal waves or earth quakes. We are told that the indigenous people of Mama say that Chaupi _amca is the maker of women (Chapter 13, sec.172). Likewise, Paria Caca, who is also a five-part

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actor, is the maker of men. Curiously, Chaupi _amca exists as five sisters or as a single woman from the outset of the stories, but Paria Caca's primordial existence begins as five eggs (i.e. without hierarchy) who nevertheless has a son prior to his emergence from the eggs, Huayta Curi who, disguised as a ragged, poor man, cures a local lord of an illness and marries the lord's daughter as his prize. Paria Caca's son's marriage and his successive defeats of her rich and powerful brother-in-law, (Chapter 5) are preconditions for Paria Caca's transformation from five eggs into five falcons, and finally into five brothers. In other words, the relations of hierarchy through marriage with a local woman are prerequisites for Paria Caca's unfolding. The text reads: After Huayta Curi finished all these deeds, Paria Caca flew forth from the five eggs in the shape of five falcons. The five falcons turned into humans and they began to roam around (Chapter 5, Sec. 72). One of the strange consequences of the various competitions between the two sons-in-law, framed as contests between the rich and the poor, is that Huayta Curi's ultimate victory is over his wife's sister whom he transforms into stone, turning her upside down on her head. "People coming from up above and those coming from down below will gape at your private parts as they pass by," he said. Even now people put coca on top of it when they undertake something. Her husband turned into a brocket deer (the rich son-in-law) climbed up a mountain and disappeared (Chapter 5, Sec. 69-70). Having defeated the competing sister and her husband and turning his wife's sister's vulva into an offertory, his father, Paria Caca, could emerge and direct the conquest of the region. Since these events occur before Paria Caca's emergence from the eggs, genealogical time is skewed and the focus again is on female sex, not reproduction. The identity of Paria Caca's wife is not specified in this section of the myth but she is Chaupi _amca, the five part woman who exists in female form prior to his emergence. This appears to me to be an expression of the primordial unmarkedness of femaleness as a major trope.

Before relating the events about Chaupi _amca's life and deeds (Chapter 10), the storyteller begins by saying that she was frozen into a stone with five arms (or wings) and that people used to race each other to reach her, just as they did to worship Paria Caca, leading the very same llamas to her sanctuary. All of the people called Chaupiámca "mother" and when the Spanish appeared, the people hid the five-armed stone, underground in Mama, near the Catholic priest's stable (Sec. 144-145). Cleverly hiding their major female deity/ huaca right under the priest's nose meant that she was easily venerated without interference from the new conquerers. The story goes on to say that Chaupiámca used to roam the world in human form, 'sinning' with the huacas but none of them satisfied her because their cocks were too small until she met Rucana Coto (finger-shaped mountain) above Mama. The visual imagery of the finger-shaped, big-cocked mountain above Mama, the Yunca village of origin, is so concrete it hardly qualifies as a trope. The text goes on to say: "One time he and his big cock satisfied Chaupiámca deliciously. Therefore she said 'Only this man, alone among all the other huacas, is a real man. I'll stay with this one forever.' So she turned to stone and stayed in Mama." (Chapter 10, sec. 146). The narrator goes on to describe how Chaupi _amca's sexual appetite is celebrated

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annually during the month of June. As described above, the hereditary priests, the yanca, observe the sun's movement by the light and shadow cast against a wall to determine the appropriate days for the dances and offerings. The huacas, the young initiates who impersonated the huacas' lives danced five days for Chaupi áamca's festival wearing huge bags of coca. Among the dances was one called Casa Yaco. The narrator reports:

They say that when they danced the Casa Yaco, Chaupiáamca rejoiced immensely, because in their dancing, they performed naked, some wearing only their jewelry, hiding their private parts with just a cotton breechclout. "Chaupi _amca enjoys it no end when she sees our (cocks -crossed out) private parts!" they said as they danced naked. After they danced this dance a very fertile season would follow (sec.151).

Chaupi _amca's sexuality and its relationship to fertility seem to embody the same kind of generative force that energizes extant matter, discussed in Salomon's introduction (pg. 16) as camay. In this instance, female sexuality is an essential, animating force for fertility and unlike male sexuality, in the form of excessive water, female sexuality is not depicted as dangerous but rather a necessary force that animates the world. Excessive male sexuality, an ever-present potential in the form of rushing water, is 'impounded,' controlled, or captured by women ritually (as described above) and in the act of sexual intercourse. The act of sex converts the actors into stone to be venerated as a transformed potential between life and death. Therefore, stone and water, shadow and light are the animate forms of the sexually charged living and dead.

CONCLUSION: AN IMAGINED HISTORY OF GENDER

I want to conclude with an "Imagined History of Gender," concentrating on the tropes of femaleness. With the massive destruction of the mallquis, the germinating force that balanced the phallic inseminating huacas, the androgenous reproductive pair was also destroyed. Androgyny survived however in a number of forms: the huacas that had been reincorporated into the body of Earth Mother comprise an androgenous reproductive force that also renders the earth pregnant, a concept that we find throughout the Andes. The perpetually pregnant earth is, I suggest, an important component of the unmarked quality of femaleness as a gender category. The five-fold character of Chaupiáamca in the Huarochirá tales is transformed into four sisters, the four female function of grandmother -mother/mother's sister - maternal aunt/daughter-in-law/wife.

The contemporary sexualized landscape, Earth Mother, is animate and reproductive with a preponderance of male huacas, configuring the surface of the earth, may be the result of the Spanish conquest.

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Nevertheless, there are androgynous and female sacred places mentioned in the ethnographic literature (for example, see Salazar this volume). The integrity of Pacha Mama, as the reproductive earth is most often described in the ethnographic literature often without mention that she also embodies maleness which results in an androgynous potentiality expressed by the trope of contiguity. Several exceptions were discussed, notably, the work of Allen, Bouysse and Harris, and Harrison, cited above. In the myths, the reincorporation of the phallic huaca into the womb of Earth Mother simultaneously symbolizes sex, reproduction and pregnancy. Most accounts in the ethnohistorical and ethnographic literatures however, focus on reproduction and not on the role of female sex and desire, which I believe we will find plays an important role in contemporary constructions of gender in the Andes.

The conquest masculinized much of the topography of the Andes with the destruction of the other half of the androgenous double, the mallquis, the seeds of the future. Spanish patriarchal gender schema also rendered women subordinate in some Andean cultures (see Abercrombie, this volume). But the universal subordination of women in the Andes is not universal. I found that women had a great deal of economic as well as symbolic power in Chuschi, even though society took control of women's reproductive potential with marriage. An important point I would insist upon is that gender is transformed along the life course from birth to death and into the realm of the ancestors -- "from unripe infant to petrified ancestors." I have suggested that a careful examination of Andean concepts of "Sex" in Errington's sense and female desire as a motivating force in the ever-changing world will give us new gender schema for the diverse cultures of this region of the world. Such a reexamination, I believe, will show that valorization of female sex and desire is still present in contemporary Andean gender schema. I have argued that the 'Feminine Symbolic,' androgeny and femaleness as an unmarked category in Andean gender provides challenges to both Lacanian and Freudian patriarchal theories of sexuality. This work is offered as just a few first steps on the path of discovering the value of women in Andean cultures. Mother, is identified with the fifth female function as the body of the earth herself, Pacha Mama, who is both benevolent and malevolent. The Spanish struck out against female sexuality in especially brutal ways. Nevertheless, patriarchy did not completely transform Andean notions of the 'Feminine Symbolic.' As Lopez-Barlat (1992) has pointed out, in the drawings of Guaman Poma depicting the Christian creation of the world, Eve is not represented as derived from Adam's rib. Rather, she is simultaneously created by God. Christian mythology became transformed under Andean influence.