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Correspondence and troubled meshworks of life

Ingold's "new humanism" seen from Andean Argentina and Bolivia

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Abstract: In this article, as a part of an ongoing dialogue, we reflect on the relevance of Tim Ingold's recent theoretical propositions for our own anthropological experiences with indigenous people in Andean Bolivia and Argentina. First, we briefly retrace the development of some of his central concepts, homing in on "correspondence" and "attentionality" as a possible basis for an integrated socioecological theory and its concomitant ethics. Then, we explore how these concepts can help us arrive at an understanding of the way in which attentive correspondence, based on care and respect, allows people to carry on their lives through Andean temporalities and relational environments, considering specifically their "troubledness": discrepancies, ambiguities and conflicts, both in connection with local cosmopraxis (our main focus) as it is evolving amidst postcolonial scenarios and the global ecological crisis. In this sense, the abilities of human groups to correspond can be seen as ways of coping with ecological and social turbulences. Finally, we discuss Ingold's vitalism as a form of "organic materialism", and as a non-anthropocentric "new humanism", one which considers the lines of life of humans and non-humans as they entangle with each other.

Keywords: human correspondence, anthropology of life, Andean cosmopraxis, humanism

Ingold's recent theorizations about life within current anthropological debates

Within the contemporary heterogeneous "ontological" panorama, Tim Ingold's more recent theorizations have been pointed to as an example of "alternative ontology" (Holbraad, Pedersen 2017: 49) or as a "counter-ontology", that is, an alternative relational metaphysic to the modern Cartesian substantive one (Alberti 2016: 166). Ingold himself, however, has clearly distanced himself from the ontological current, proposing to focus rather on "ontogenesis" as a universal entry point for the anthropological study of life – and of the concomitant possibilities for future human life along its dynamics of interstitial differentiation. At the same time, he has shown a growing interest in the ethical and political implications of his proposal to recalibrate anthropology in pragmatic and non-anthropocentric investigative ways, with an urgent invitation to expose ourselves to the entangled lines of life, including the meteorological, cosmological and geological dimensions of the "one world" we humans inhabit (Ingold 2015; de Munter 2022). Although he has inspired several scholars connected to the ontological turn, Ingold has refused the multiplication of worlds, natures and ontologies that they have advocated (Alberti 2016; Knudsen 2016). For Ingold, "*all"* humans "perceive of the world as affordances through a process of direct perception"; he thus removes "the culture argument" and distances himself from cognitivism and constructivism (Knudsen 2016: 193). This does not mean of course that he does not recognize that different experiences exist everywhere, and that anthropology should not take them seriously, but he is clearly more interested in what philosopher François Jullien (2012) calls the "écart" (in-between) perspective: not looking for separate identities or working out comparisons, but exploring diverging experiences that *relate* in intricate ways and that allow for communing standpoints. Ingold has been concerned with "humaning"[1] as a generalized, relational process of growth (2015: 115-119), in which every generation and every individual must re-discover her differentiating "ways", corresponding with other lines of life, guided and accompanied by forebears through stories and teachings. In respect of the ontogenesis of humans, he speaks of "anthropogenesis" (*ibidem*: 120-124).

1. The verb "to humanify" (or more philosophically, "to human") in Ingold's usage (2015) is to be distinguished radically from "to humanize" (personify) and from "to anthropomorphize"; he uses both verbs to refer to how we humans carry on our lives by practice, by constantly making ourselves human.

Thus, focused on concepts like becoming, ontogenesis, correspondence, attentiveness and lines of life, with a constant critique of human exceptionalism, the anthropology advocated by Ingold can be conceived of as an anthropology of life, as a renewed vitalism – or, as we propose, as an organic materialism – that invites us to take a fully integrated look at organic, material, environmental and temporal aspects of social life. This means fully reintroducing "life" within social theory. To a certain degree, this also connects with the so-called "new materialism"[2] in anthropology and archaeology (Fowler, Harris 2015). Nevertheless, Ingold's theory, partly grounded in phenomenology, seems to avoid the post-humanist approach often invoked by new materialist scholars. Even though Ingold himself called for an "anthropology beyond humanity" (2013), his recent theorizations remain strongly committed to "human correspondence" (2016) and to the ongoing process of humaning as the process of becoming human.

This makes Ingold's philosophical anthropology potentially appealing as a tool for working toward a "new humanism" in both anthropology and philosophy (Wentzer, Mattingly 2018: 147-148). Anthropology, according to Ingold, is "an inquiry into the conditions and potentials of *human life in the world*" (2011: 242, emphasis added). Current problems – of ecological disaster, mental health and economic inequality – urgently require us to expand our critical thinking into speculative explorations, and to do this together with people and "with the earth"[3]. Nevertheless, ethnographic "*engagement* with people" – in their own engagements with the world – remains the main feature of the discipline.

Joining together the twin concepts of correspondence and attention

At the beginning of his intellectual journey, Ingold was interested in the idea of "production" as that of "the ongoing process of social life", in terms of Marx and Engels's materialism, attempting to "resituate the historical experience of human beings within the evolving matrices of development in which all living beings are immersed" (2011: 3-14). From this point of view, the social is radically embedded in life[4],with humans constantly engaging with the living,

2. A multidisciplinary movement originally connected to feminist theory (Barad 2003; Alaimo, Hekman 2008) and political and anthropological philosophy (DeLanda 2006; Bennett 2010).
3. This might also be linked to the "terrestrial" perspective proposed by Bruno Latour (2018) as a political standing that avoids making distinction between humans and non-humans, emphasizing their relation as terrestrials.
4. Elizabeth Povinelli, for her part, has in recent publications strengthened her own critical perspective on the idea of "life" – postcolonially informed and directly attacking the

organic material world they are part of. This idea was at the very core of his influential dwelling perspective (2000), partly based on his reinterpretation of animism as "animacy" (2011: 67-68), drawing on both indigenous experiences and Western philosophical vitalism. This dwelling perspective, centred in the partaking in her environmental relationships by the "organism-person" (2000), was complemented in later writings by the concept of "meshworks" or "bundle of lines" (2011; 2015), in which he progressively moved his focus from practices, materials, techniques and enskilment (2000) to processes of "making-in-growing" and creative experiences of "doing-in-undergoing" (2015). Thus, relying on the post-structuralist critical philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987) and on recent writings of Erin Manning (2016), amongst others, Ingold reconceived the notion of agency in a profoundly relational, ecological and non-volitional sense as "agencing" (Ingold 2018) or fields of "*agencement*" (Ingold 2021b: 259-261). The concept of education becomes central in his anthropological thinking: people get skilled and educated by exposing themselves to the world out there, engaging attentively but actively in open-ended dynamics of extended *agencement*[5].This is how, inspired by John Dewey and Jan Masschelein, he moved on from "the perception of the environment" to the notion of "education by attention", deepening the political reach of his work (de Munter 2022). Thus, attentionality and attentiveness have gradually become key notions in his thinking. In a rich polysemic reading of the basic concept of attention, Ingold shows how this getting involved with life, seen from the human side, is about the art of attending to it, in multiple ways[6]: caring for beings or things "in a way that is both practical and dutiful"; learning to wait for (cf. the French *attendre*) things to happen; "*being present*, or coming into presence, as on an occasion"; "[accompanying] and *going along* with others" and, finally and importantly, "longing", following Ingold's reading of the etymology of *ad-tendere*, "to stretch towards": "the stretch of life that I am after" (2018: 21, 20; original emphases). This praxis of attention is multidirectional and shows often impressive reciprocal dynamics among humans,

liberal system – by means of concepts like geontology and geontopower, highlighting particularly how an anthropology of life – though not her concept – should always, somehow paradoxically, depart from a political-historical discussion of the problematic distinction between life (bios) and non-life (geos) – both constituting the one cosmos or world we humans dwell in (Povinelli 2016; Ingold 2021a).

5. In this way Ingold came to conceive of education as an intrinsic synonym for anthropology (2018).
6. See also Anna Tsing's (2015) "arts of noticing".

between humans and other beings/becomings or presences[7], and among other living beings – like plants and animals[8]. In recent writings Ingold insistently refers to these dynamics of mutual attentiveness via the notion of correspondence. Humans act and are made to act in a certain way by corresponding to each other, but also to non-human becomings or presences. For Ingold (2018), in dialogue with Dewey and Manning, human correspondence is based on the triple foundation of attentionality, *agencement* and habit, rather than on intentionality, volition and agency. Habits, as everyday experiences of learning and sharing, entail doing by undergoing or – in an interestingly active-passive formulation – "doing undergoing": humans make/do/create by submitting themselves to and attending to the things and processes they encounter. To conceive of these actions and attitudes as agencing allows us to appreciate how correspondence – the affective, physical and aesthetic ability to be receptive and respond to other lines of life[9] – is produced in the socioecological meshwork of lines along which we humans move, caring for and attending to past and future generations, other beings/becomings and presences. This attentiveness is a skill that is constantly maintained since we become and make ourselves humans (humanify, in Ingold's words) by corresponding along our own lines of growth, decay and regeneration as humans (learn to) do.

Attentionality or attentiveness is what drives people, whose lives are conceived as lines of growth, decay and regeneration, as a practice of mutual care. Concurrently, correspondence entails responsivity/responsiveness and responsibility[10]. People learn to attend to their social and ecological surroundings by being a part of them, tuning in to them, but at the same time producing variations and transformation. Noticeably, in his latest compilation of essays, Ingold states that

7. "He or she [the inhabitant in search of shelter] may be solitary, but this solitude is anything but isolating, for it is grounded in a heightened perceptual attentiveness to the surroundings – an attentiveness that can extend to deep and sympathetic companionship towards others in a similar situation" (Ingold 2021a: 110).
8. "After all, living beings of all sorts attend to each other's ways in the prosecution of their lives … Plants, too, are not only deeply attentive to the movements of the sun and winds, and of creatures that come to feed or to pollinate; they also communicate their experience among themselves" (Ingold 2021a: 121).
9. "Response-ability", in Haraway's (2012) words.
10. Attentional habits allow for imagination and creativity: their "creativity is that of 'doing undergoing', of *agencement*, in which beings continually forge themselves and one another in the crucible of social life, their humanity not a foregone conclusion but an ongoing relational achievement" (Ingold 2018: 33).

> [t]he key to correspondence lies in the twin principles that life is not confined to fixed points or locations but lived along lines, and that as they go along together these lines – rather like melodies in musical counterpoint – continually differentiate themselves from within the texture of their polyphony… Correspondence, in short, is about *living together in difference*. (2021b: 6; original emphasis)

This is interesting because even in the one-world anthropology that Ingold advocates for[11] differences are at the heart of the production of life, only that here we are talking not about rigid cultural differences but about the differentiation – and also confluence – that emerges from how different kinds of beings – including of course human beings and groups – correspond in their becoming-with-the-world. It is also interesting because it invites us to reflect seriously upon the profound ambiguities inherent in what human corresponding might mean, especially in our messy world, in situations where disbalanced power relations (among humans, between human and non-human) often make it difficult or even impossible to be responsive in socially and ethically constructive or felicitous ways. It invites us to reflect upon how this correspondence within all-encompassing nature is constantly being stressed, and to reconsider the place of social and political conflicts within human practices and imagination. These are aspects we – inspired by Andean experiences of cosmopraxis[12] – will briefly explore, in order to imagine a contrapuntal "polyphony" full of distortions and troubled ways of corresponding. These refer to both existential troubles, such as the ambiguities of environmental relationality in the case of illness, and socio-political troubles, in the case of conflicts over resources, power relations and hierarchy. Ingold is of course not blind to this dimension, but it is necessary to amplify the idea of human correspondence with a discussion of situations where it is managed in cruder, albeit always attentive, ways.

11. See Ingold 2021b, part IV, chapter 23, where he elaborates on his conviction that anthropology should not conceive of cultural differences as a given, but rather always start from a common social-ecological condition for all humans and from there onwards consider differences – importantly, not only cultural ones.
12. We speak of cosmopraxis as opposed to cosmovision or worldview because our epistemological and methodological baseline is that of an anthropology of practices. When we speak about cosmopraxis we are guided in the first place by people's practices and rather disregard theoretical approaches which assume that people's actions are structured mostly -or even determined by- a set of ideas, symbols, and rules—a cosmovision—. The advantage of focusing on practices (cosmopraxis) is that it allows (a) for a more direct and pragmatic approach of learning or educational processes, in the broad sense it is given here and (b) for an ecologically sensitive study of how people or groups of people go about coping with their living environment(s). (De Munter, Note 2009; De Munter 2022)

About caring and being careful: being educated by awe in Andean contexts

It should be emphasized that the concepts that Ingold elaborates -relevant for and intimately involved with the troubled world we live in – draw not only from Western phenomenological, vitalist or pedagogical philosophy but also from the 'indigenous' experiences of the world, lived through in the anthropological engagement with people's doings, affects and opinions, in Ingold's case with the Sami people. As one of us discussed in an earlier article (de Munter 2022), concepts and theories used in symmetrical approaches like the present one ought not be applied or employed in order to "explain" people's relational practices or accounts; rather, they (i.e people's practices and the conceptual tracks proposed by anthropologists) complement and reinforce each other for the sake of the general argument. In the current reflection, the combined concepts of correspondence and attentionality as proposed by Ingold guide us in our anthropological explorations and close study of socioecological practices and attitudes in western Bolivia and north-western Argentina (de Munter 2016, 2018; Salvucci 2022). In our current research, these allow us to better understand how the dynamics of relationality come into being in Andean indigenous cosmopraxis (see also de Munter 2009; de Munter, Note 2016) and how this understanding might be useful for compelling reorientations of ecologic-economic policy everywhere (de Munter 2022).

Of course, attitudes of attention and care also entail being attentive and careful toward lines of life and presences that are known to be possibly threatening or even dangerous for humans, something that has been studied anthropologically all over the world (Vincent 2017) and, notoriously, for the Andean region (Arnold *et al.* 1998). Indeed, caring for or attending to *pachamama* – of whom human beings are part and for whose generous gifts (*khuyanaka*, in Aymara) people give thanks – also often implies being careful of (*cuidarse de*) and even wary of the powerful energies that emanate from her multiple, intertwined becomings. To be attentive, therefore, means not only to pay attention to, to be concerned about, but also to beware of. Taking care of and protecting the life-giving processes that occur within *pachamama* also entails, in a certain sense, protecting oneself against her, in submissive but active ways. In the same vein, if attentionality is linked to affection and affectionality – i.e. taking care of with gentleness and openness – this also implies the possibility of being affected in contradictory and even harmful ways. This is concordant with what has been theorized about the inherent ambiguities in reciprocity praxis in general, which is always related with obligations

and sometimes even with vengeance (Temple 2003; Yampara, Temple 2008)[13]. In all these variations of reciprocity praxis, we can apply the rich reading of agency as *agencement*. You attend to meteorological events in ritual or more everyday ways (Ingold's "weather-wising", 2015: 71), but you also take care of yourself and take precautions (ritually, agriculturally, physically) against possible adverse events. This then reflects not a passive or suffering attitude but rather a quite literal illustration of doing-undergoing in its strong middle-voice sense (both active and passive), as we will show in more detail below. With Spinoza and Levinas we know that responses – to possibly harmful scenarios, in our argument – are made in a phenomenological and interpellating way. Julie Cruikshank (2005) tells us how the glacier warns us with its roar and how we attend with our ears to what it lets us hear, within a field of mutual affectations of different kinds.

Alison Spedding (2008: 105-126) defined the Andean landscape as a "vivified" one in which environmental elements are ambivalent living beings, as potentially beneficial as they are dangerous to humans. There are the mountains, which are associated with the ancestors (*apu* in Quechua, *achachila* in Aymara), protectors of people and their animals, but also with a series of potentially malevolent entities (e.g. *anchanchu*) associated with the mountains themselves; the winds that can bring much-desired rain, but can also be destructive; the *ojos de agua* (lit. eyes of water, wells) or *jalsu* that can provide water but also result in desertification when they fail (de Munter *et al.* 2019), and similar tensions can be noticed in the case of lakes (contaminated but still providing food) and mines (providing jobs at the price of horrific levels of contamination). Scholars with an interest in rituals have emphasized these predatory aspects of the Andean living landscape (recently also drawing on studies of the Amazon, e.g. Arnold 2022), and the role of sacrifice (Arnold 2018) and food offerings as a form of "payment", within the framework of reciprocity amongst human and non-humans (amongst others, Gose 1994; Rösing 1994; Fernández 1996; Canessa 2000; Allen 2002; Salvucci 2015, 2016a) or in the context of a (dis)equilibrium of the cosmological energetic "flow of life" (Allen 2002; Arnold 2017, 2018).

In Andean anthropology, scholars have highlighted for decades that within indigenous lifeworlds things are not usually perceived as merely "good"

13. Temple and colleagues explain reciprocity dynamics as a crucial dynamic for life functions around potentialities and actualizations of giving and giving "back". There is a myriad of possibilities, but what really matters is that there is a potential "line" of reciprocity that is going on and that at some point gets realized.

or "evil", since they can be both positive and negative (Arnold, Yapita 1998). From a linguistic perspective, it has been underlined, for instance, that the Aymara suffix *-ina* means simultaneously "maybe yes, maybe not" (Hardman *et al.* 1988). In a similar vein, Dominique Temple (2003), inspired by the "antagonistic principle" of French-Romanian philosopher Stéphane Lupasco, wrote about a "tripolar" (or trivalent) logic in order to better explain the principle of reciprocity, a "logic" he saw at work in Aymara tradition and which he explored as an alternative to capitalism[14]. This logic implies a third polarity, a mutually potentializing contradiction of the two polarities in binary opposition. According to Temple, things or phenomena might be positive, negative and "simultaneously" positive and negative, in a constant alternating and potentializing flow of contradictory energies. From this perspective, beings/becomings, such as the *uywiri* (caring/educating) mountains, *uraqpacha* (earth-soil) or *pachamama*, are, in their relation to human beings, potentially both benevolent and malevolent – concepts that lose their absolute meaning and make sense only in relational terms. To be aware of and ready to attend to the living earth with its vicissitudes, the presence of the lines of life of other humans and non-humans, thus, also entails being wary of them within a shared field of agencing. Being educated in awe in Andean lifetimes and spaces, therefore, is to learn to respect how different lines of life intertwine with ours, facing them in uncertain conditions, caring for them and longing actively for a felicitous reciprocity – even though the latter is never guaranteed. In a way, it would seem, these ambiguities – experienced and coped with continuously in everyday and ritual actions – probably even reinforce a certain sense of relationality in the people.

Correspondences, ambiguities and troubledness in the Argentinean and Bolivian Andes

In a broader study about socioecological practices among contemporary Aymara families in recent years, de Munter (2022; de Munter, Bustos 2022) has studied the ways they relate to the *uywiri*, considered to be protective or educating presences. Those mountains are always there, accompanying living generations as they accompanied previous generations and as they will do those in the future. Attending to them – as well as to the ancestors, to whom

14. Temple's suggestion (2003, but previously published in French) of the existence of profound coincidences between this quantum-like dynamics and Aymara reciprocity or *ayni* practices has been widely recognized and appreciated by Aymara intellectuals and activists since the 1990s.

they are related – means paying them attention not only as a form of respect for their guiding us through space and time, and showing them gratitude for their generosity, but also as a form of longing, asking them for something and waiting for it to happen, or maybe not happen (de Munter 2022). The *uywiri* are honoured in stories and rituals, they are visited by families on special occasions, and they guide and educate human groups in their everyday activities – such as the collective harvesting of potatoes or the annual commemorations of the dead (de Munter 2016). This provides an interesting example of how humanifying or, in a more general sense, humaning[15] takes place in intimate contact with life along all its dimensions, in concrete and immanent ways. Aymara families,

> collectivities that emerge through visiting-and-corresponding, attend in undergoing but active ways to that which is enfolding them – that which has seen them grow (*uywiri*) – and thus is educating them, in multiple ways. (de Munter 2022: 86)

This is, indeed, the cultural signification of *uywiri*[16], derived from the verb *uywaña* (to raise, to be raised). Aymara being a polysynthetic language, one can literally insert into the heart of this idea of "raising" the often-used, small infix -*si*-[17] in order to refer to raising (and being raised) with respect and *cariño* (affection), two of the attributes that people often use when saying what it means to become an Aymara person, or *jaqi*. *Uywasiña* then, with the affective infix, has to do with the multiple and mutual affectations that occur during human correspondence, i.e. with the *uywiri*. During their occasional visits (*tumpaña*, or visit, is a verb central to Aymara cosmopraxis) the people should approach the *uywiri* with respect and prudence: some of them are known to be potentially "malevolent", others very strict or bad-tempered (though this is probably an inappropriate characterization, considering the above-mentioned trivalent logic characteristic of Aymara axiology). It is worth noting that people visit the *uywiri* not because they represent in themselves a kind of

15. "This is an immanent life lived midstream, in the in-between, where there are no subjects, no objects, no subject–object hybrids, only verbs. Wherever you find them, humans are humaning" (Ingold 2015: 152). See also note 1.
16. This is a personal communication from Teofilo Laime, November 2019. It is not only certain mountains that are denominated *uywiri* – the term can also be used to denote some cavity in the countryside, a house, a tree or even a deceased (grand)mother – but it is most commonly used to indicate the "sacred" mountains. Some *uywiri* are considered more important than others, but their omnipresence is striking. The snow-capped *uywiri* mountains are usually referred to with the more honorific term *achachila*.
17. -*si*- as an infix can express reflexivity, reciprocity and affectivity.

sacred entity or "mountain spirit"; they visit them mainly because the educator-mountains are connected with so many living surroundings – wind, clouds, air, the soil – and because from their summits some of the great *achachila* (Illampu and others) – as well as Mama Quta (Lake Titicaca) – can be seen on the horizon[18]. They educate people's attention in many ways. On the best-known *uywiri*, as on Pachjiri in Umasuyus, there are several important offering places or *wak'a*, each related with different dimensions or aspects of cosmo-conviviality. All are to be visited. We will briefly mention the four principal ones in order to show clearly how the plurivalent and ambiguous character of these mountainous presences is at play and is coped with. Up on Pachjiri, near a huge rock on a remote slope, people bring offerings to *manqha pacha*, referring to the energies or "spirits" of the "underworld" (all infelicitous translations, undoubtedly). Rituals here are carried out in a serious, almost secretive and decidedly restrained way: *manqha pacha* forces inspire awe, apprehension and even fear. A little further away, on another mountain peak, people offer more joyous *mesas* (compound offerings) to *aka pacha*, which is both a physical place and a representation of the actual world we live in, on earth. There they celebrate in an openly extravert way, chattering, sometimes laughing but always purposeful. *Aka pacha* is an excellent place for giving thanks and for asking for the success of the crops. Walking on, we come to a huge, dark rock called the *wak'a* of *illapa* (lightning), considered a connecting force *par excellence*, where white flowers, wine and specially intertwined threads (*ch'iqa*)[19] are offered, and where people ask for future protection and give thanks for the things that have happened in their life. This is also the place where aborted and miscarried foetuses have traditionally been buried, with the appropriate rites. Finally, at the highest point of *uywiri* Pachjiri people again offer white flowers and different types of incense to the *alax-pacha* or timespace of the sky (*alax* = beyond), where one can almost literally touch the clouds, the winds and the sun, or the stars at night. In short, people visit and honour this *uywiri* because of its relational potential, which can be felt in many ways – seeing, sensing, fearing, binding.

18. This is at least our experience in Umasuyus and Los Andes provinces, in the department of La Paz. Certainly Lake Titicaca is frequently visible from the ritually most important places on *uywiri* Pachjiri.
19. *Ch'iqa* (*lloque* in Quechua) literally means "to the left"; in Spanish this is *hilo zurdo* ("left-handed thread"; in textile praxis: two threads entwined/twisted to the left, but also a thread that has been spun by turning the spindle (*puska*) leftwards. In rituals the Aymara use *ch'iqa* threads because of their protective power.

But maybe more important even than this particular ritual attentiveness, as channelled through the (visiting of) *uywiri* mountains, is that attentionality is generated and maintained along a continuum of everyday and more ritual actions[20]. The everyday dimension of caring attention can be noted simply in thanking one's dinner companions after a meal, in daily gestures like *ch'alla* (libations), in small family thanksgiving rituals like the *jatha katu*, and more generally in an intensely constant preoccupation for the well-being of the fields or *chacra*. Specifically, the planting and growing processes of some of the essential crops (quinoa, potatoes, barley) in the *comunidades* are taken care of by the *kamani* – married couples elected to or charged with this task – who organize collective ritual moments and ensure that every member of the community duly completes her agricultural tasks. This is also why the *kamani*, among others elected to or charged with the responsibility of correspondence with *pachamama*, learn to approach with much prudence the unpredictable climatological elements – as they can benefit or damage the growing process – at times engaging physically with them and at others even literally "fighting" them, for instance by shouting, lighting fires or throwing dynamite into the air when thunder and lightning threaten (see also Van Kessel, Enríquez 2002). As we have stated elsewhere as regards ritual-ecological attentionality in general (de Munter, Bustos 2022), it is not so much that people believe that these actions are "effective" in themselves; rather for them it is crucial that the people in charge (the *kamani* in this case) do things in the right and proper way, attending to how the lines of life of their community entangle often difficultly with their living environment (Montellano, Arnez 2016). *Uywasiña* has as much to do with *cariño* as it has with harsh obligations and with managing the uncertainty and ambiguities inherent to life.

In her research on kinship and family relations in indigenous upland communities in the provinces of Salta (Jasimaná) and Catamarca (Laguna Blanca) in north-western Andean Argentina, Salvucci (2015; 2016a; 2016b; 2018; 2022) has addressed everyday ritual practices and seasonal ceremonies of relationality between people, cultivated fields, herd animals and *pachamama*. Ingold's ideas about attentionality and correspondence of lifelines, as a meshwork that includes the lines of life walked by the ethnographer-anthropologist herself, help us to better understand the upland lifeworld and agricultural activities,

20. We use "continuum" in a double sense, along an axis of less strong to stronger ritual intensity and along a temporal axis, through the year. It should be noted that for many of the offerings the intervention of a ritual specialist (a *yatiri*, for example) is not required; families carry out their own rituals under the supervision of a more experienced family member.

particularly pastoralism (camelid, ovine and caprine), practised by extended families through a pattern of multiple residence. Through the verb *criar* – the Spanish translation of the Aymara *uywaña* used in north-west Argentina – pastoralists refer to their practices as a form of "mutual raising" (see also Bugallo, Tomasi 2012). This applies to relations between people, their herd animals, their fields and water sources (Lema 2014), thereby involving *pachamama* as a living environment. *Criar* also refers to how parents and grandparents rear children (not necessarily biological kin) and entails attending to them and to herd animals, and crops by being there, caring for them, protecting them and waiting for them to become, to grow up and multiply, whilst longing for their well-being

Attending to their children, animals, and plants, people take care of *pachamama*, in a continuum of activities, the everyday and the more ritual, such as seasonal ceremonies. Several daily practices, including those associated with work, entail ritual aspects: people usually make offerings to *pachamama*, asking permission when starting a specific agricultural task (planting or harvesting) or pastoralist activity (branding or shearing). When travelling from one place to another on foot, on horseback or by car, especially along a difficult route and at specific crossing places, people make libations to *pachamama*, usually pouring alcohol (*ch'alla*) and blowing coca leaves to her. They also make her seasonal offerings, such as the "payment to the earth" (as it is known in Jasimaná) in August, usually on the 1st. In this month, the coldest and driest in the Andean uplands, *pachamama* is considered to be hungry and fragile, "like a pregnant woman". It is said that the stones are born in this season and that the earth is "in motion", making it dangerous for humans to travel. People tell of the many accidents, falls and injuries that befall those who do not take enough care or pay due attention when travelling in August. Through the "payment" people not only "feed" *pachamama* (they say "*dar de comer a la tierra*", or feed the earth) as a form of self-protection, satisfying her hunger and avoiding being eaten by her; they also, and above all, convey respect, reciprocity, commensality and mutual care, thanking for her gifts and asking her to protect the people and the animals and to allow the herd to multiply. People say, in fact, that they "have to respect" *pachamama* ("*hay que respetar a la pachamama*"), rather than "fear" her. During the payment, they address *pachamama* with affection and *cariño* using nicknames such as *Pachita*, *Mamita* (little Pacha, little Mama). This payment to the earth is a family ceremony – one which does not entail the involvement of a ritual specialist. It

is led by the head of the family, frequently the woman who manages the family herd (*hacienda*). After the ritual cleaning of people's bodies and house, the ritual cleaning of the animals' corral, and the ritual activities with the animals, (people cuts off the ends of lambs' tails to be offered to *pachamama* later), the family members share lunch with *pachamama*. They sit around her "mouth", a hole in the earth dug in the same place near the family's main house every year, into which they put foods and drinks, and the ends of the lambs' tails, as an offering to *pachamama*. They also give her coca leaves and let her smoke cigarettes. Children are taught by the elders how to make the offerings; they are allowed to light the cigarettes and insert them in the sides of the hole so that *pachamama* can smoke. In the end, *pachamama*'s mouth is closed and an *apacheta* – a little cairn-like shrine – is built beside it: white stones are piled up, bound with a raw wool string, each stone associated with the animals that the people long for in the next season.

In Laguna Blanca, the offering to *pachamama* on August the 1st is called *corpachada* (homage, tribute). Such as in Jasimaná, it is intended to thank *pachamama* for her gifts, to ask her for health, but also to avoid that pacha "takes people", that "the earth and the airs could harm them" ("*para que no nos agarre la pacha, para que no nos haga daño la tierra, los aires*"). In line with the tripolar logic, *pachamama* is seen as a powerful being/becoming, potentially benevolent, as she gives people their harvest of crops and animals, but also, at the same time, potentially dangerous, as she "eats" people too. (See June Nash's classic anthropological study, 1979.)

Pachamama is considered the true owner of the animals, which she gives to human shepherds, whereas the wild vicuñas are her personal herd. If people truly need a vicuña, she can give it to them as a gift; if not, she will punish the disrespectful hunters, for instance, making them get lost in the uplands following ghost vicuñas' herds. Thus, by attending to their fields, pastures, animals and children, and by attending wild animals such as the vicuñas, people attend to *pachamama* as the materialization of all relational becomings: that is, they are humaning amidst a meshwork of complex lines of life. Such a correspondence with a relational environment, nevertheless, is intrinsically based on uncertainties. As well as benefiting from *pachamama*'s gifts, people can be affected by her breaths (*respiros*), which can make humans ill, and by the *ojos de agua* that can swallow up people and other animals. They can fall or suffer some other accident, be scared (*asustarse*) and have their soul (the vital force associated with their individual consciousness) stolen by rivers, mountains or

other presences. Corresponding is thereby a doing-in-undergoing that has to cope with existential environmental ambiguities and uncertainties, far from any naive "harmony ideology" (as conceived by Ruth Nader, 1990). Troubling life events – for example, accidents and illness – could be the consequences of a lack of respect toward the vital entanglement of human and non-human becomings (failing to make offerings to *pachamama*, or hunting unnecessarily, for example), which could break the spiral of reciprocity (if I do not make offerings to *pachamama*, she will take back her gifts).

In Laguna Blanca, for the past two decades on August the 1st, beside the *corpachada* to *pachamama* which is carried out by families at a domestic level, people have also been organizing a collective *corpachada* in the public square of the village.[21] This ceremony, together with other ritual events and every day practices, has helped to consolidate local indigenous communities (Delfino 2020) as political becomings, highlighting how, attentiveness and correspondence are also forms of political awareness and resistance. During the past collective *corpachada*, for the opening of *pachamama*'s mouth on the eve of August the 1st 2023, the cacique (authority) of the local indigenous community thanked *pachamama* for her gifts, offering her especially water, which is not so usual. She remarked on water being the most important source of life, the one which is currently under threat due to the contested provincial project of building a new gold mine by a multinational corporation in the area (despite the partial protection of this territory as a biosphere reserve). In the past few years, many people have strongly opposed this plan which puts at risk of destruction local correspondences and ways of life (Boos, Salvucci forthcoming). *Pachamama*, therefore, has been emerging as an "Earth Being" of indigenous "cosmopolitics" (de la Cadena 2010) in a situation of "friction" (Tsing 2005) among local cosmopraxis, national economics, and global capitalism. Looking at this dynamic as a knot of troubled correspondences, helps us to better understand the ambiguities and contradictions of the situation. Beside the opposition between a cosmopraxis based on relational attentionality and mutual care, on the one hand, and a neo-extractivist paradigm grounded on the exploitation of objectified natural "resources", on the other, there is an intricated meshwork of uncertain alliances, broken reciprocities, internal divisions, but also new, renewed and "traditional" solidarities and convergences,

21. In Río Grande de Jasimaná a collective offering to pachamama, called "despacho" (dispatch), is organized by the indigenous community and takes place on the 31st of August (Salvucci 2016b).

including people and the earth, through which correspondences emerge as a political arena too.

Corresponding as coping with ambiguities, conflicts and uncertainties

Drawing on our experiences in Andean Argentina and Bolivia, and further elaborating Ingold's ideas, we propose the notion of "troubled correspondence" to better understand Andean indigenous cosmopraxis, according to a tripolar logic, as well as its political relevance. Correspondence and attentionality become a form of political education and struggle, especially in situations of glocal friction and socio-ecological crisis: from this perspective, correspondence also means "learning to fight" ("*aprender a luchar*").

Considering both these aspects, studying correspondence/attentionality/humaning among troubled lines of life opens also a wider ethic perspective, exploring a renewed, non-anthropocentric humanism that could be useful for coping with planetary socio-ecological turbulences.

First, as we have seen, the Aymara concept of *uywasiña*, as well as its Spanish translation *criar*, means affective raising and letting oneself be raised through everyday and ritual cosmopraxis, or what Ingold calls "human correspondence". This attentional and affective corresponding is never free of ambiguities and contradictions; indeed, these might even be considered (part of) its quintessence. Such reciprocity is always also about obligations, potentialities and uneven power relations. Nevertheless, the starting point of *uywasiña* is always to do things right, to care for, and duly attend to, them. This doing is about submitting and attending to what surrounds us and is related to what in Spanish can be called *la suerte*: not only good luck, but the fate people create as they make their way through life (*thakhichaña*) in a non-fatalistic way. Bewaring of fate in practice often refers to an active or proactive engaging with. Consider the *kamani* who, for the period they assume the ecological-social responsibility their *comunidad* entrusts to them, at times almost literally fight with the elements; the family members who visit (climb) *uywiri* mountains to carry out the rituals in order to prevent disastrous events or to ask for a prosperous harvest, and those who pay *pachamama*, longing for good fortune. When people visit the mountains, to (simultaneously) give thanks and make requests – without being certain what will befall them – they are perfectly aware that things might or might not work out well. Nonetheless, they must always be responsive in the socially and ecologically correct (corresponding) ways. The same applies to the

offerings to *pachamama* made by family and community members in our Argentinian case. The idea of uncertainty might be said, in fact, to be included in the very concept of becoming, as well as in Ingold's idea of longing, as the basis of the practice of attentiveness.

Second, to conceive of correspondence – including existential ambiguities and possible discrepancies in expectations – as a fundamentally troubled matter allows for critical political reflections, too. We have witnessed conflicting interpretations of what constitute natural resources: as seen from inside an Aymara community and from the state (de Munter forthcoming). Such frictions are even starker in the case of a plurinational state like Bolivia: exploitation of resources for growth on the one side, a more balanced but never ingenuous way of recognizing and cherishing nature's generous gifts (*khuyanaka*) on the other. In Andean Argentina, many indigenous communities are facing the same conflict and non-correspondence between private and statal interests in natural resources as business and profit, and the community's claims to their right to produce and reproduce themselves within a relational environment, such as in the case of Laguna Blanca. These frictions often divide communities and even families. Correspondence, therefore, is to be seen as a constant battlefield.

Although this brief ethnographic account cannot deal in detail with these and related situations[22], it is clear that correspondence is always connected to friction, hierarchy, abuse and power relations in cases of gender, social, political and ecological violence and exploitation (Burman 2017). Humaning as corresponding and living together among existing and emerging differences ("counterpoint", to cite Ingold 2021b: 6), is a very tough task, especially in contexts of generalized social inequalities, ecological injustice, political negotiation and conflict between indigenous communities and statal and neoliberal commercial powers. All these aspects make the notion of correspondence – which also involves potential un-correspondence, opposition and ir-responsibility – particularly useful for dealing critically with current indigenous cosmopraxis, as our experiences show, and also with historical transformations and conflicts in the frame of contemporary capitalism and global ecological crisis (e.g. Povinelli 2016; de Munter 2018).

Finally, the idea of correspondence, given its intrinsically troubled dimensions, becomes even more relevant because it allows for a precise, in-depth

22. See de Munter, Bustos 2022 on the cultural conflict over the Sunata peninsula and Fernández 2014 on that over the Pachjiri *uywiri*.

evaluation of how responsiveness and responsibility are enacted (or not) in relational and humanifying practices. People do things carefully and attentionally, but remain apprehensive, as things can work out in positive or negative ways. This is what trivalent logic means in practice: you act with awe (or even fear), but always "longing" (in Ingold's strong sense) for good or better alignments, and never naively. It is in this sense that we think some important things can be learned, not only from responsive and responsible indigenous socioecological practices, but also from the ways people everywhere have to cope with (a more pragmatic way of saying "correspond" with) our messy times.

Studying situations from the critical perspective of correspondence (and its twin concept attentionality) allows us to better understand those where individual and collective socioecological and political practices thrive on non-responsiveness and ir-responsibility, and potentially to realign or transform them.

As we have seen, Andean cosmopraxis progresses by way of experiences with troubled correspondence and education-by-awe as a form of respect. Maybe paradoxically, this seems to allow people to manage existential fear in a practical and direct way, facing uncertainties as the quintessence of relationality, as part of the material and organic dimension of life (an "organic materialism", as we propose drawing on Ingold's earlier theorizations), without avoiding, denying or removing them, and without letting them to be politically instrumentalized[23]. In a way, these ambiguities – experienced continuously in everyday and ritual actions – maybe even strengthen the sense of relationality among people.

Conceiving of human correspondence as embedded in a deeply troubled relational environment, therefore, invites us to highlight the possibility of a new humanism within Ingold's theory (Wentzer, Mattingly 2018). This underlines the common points (or as he would prefer, the "counterpoints") of "living in the differences" as relational becomings, avoiding the reifications of cultural diversity and mystifying eulogies, for instance those of civilization against barbarity, or of the *bon sauvage* opposing a decadent modernity. As sentient beings/becomings, human and non-human animals, we are affected by life itself, just as are plants (Coccia 2018). This means considering bio-so-

23. From the blurb of sociologist Frank Furedi's 2018 book *How Fear Works*: "Fear appears to provide a provisional solution to moral uncertainty and is for that reason embraced by a variety of interests, parties and individuals. Furedi predicts that until society finds a more positive orientation towards uncertainty the politicisation of fear will flourish".

cio-cultural processes of growing and transforming (becoming) as interwoven and reciprocally co-constituting (environment as sympoiesis). Despite the necessary emphasis on more-than-human relationality, we cannot exceed or go beyond our human experience of it. Given that the lines of life correspond among each other, in both troubled and non-troubled ways, our doing-in-undergoing is always human correspondence. What we study as anthropologists then are the experiences, praxes, affections and epistemologies of Anthropos, focusing on differences (the counterpoints) and highlighting the communal process of humaning (what Ingold calls anthropogenesis). This calls for a kind of "renewed humanism"[24], which considers the human condition as the emerging, complex result of variation, imagination and creativity, but also of existential and socio-political troubles, amidst the dynamics of environmental relationality bringing together sentient beings and other presences, in a never harmonious "dance of animacy". The longing and the mutual and sometimes contradictory affectations that characterize this process reflect a genuine political compromise with what Ingold (2021b) intriguingly calls the "sustainability of everything".

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24. Interestingly enough, Ingold himself is clearly advocating in favour of such a new humanism: "But if the old humanism was literally innocent of both anthropocentrism and place-attachment, for the new humanism these would prove foundational. It would acknowledge that humans are indeed exceptional among animals in their art of speech, which uniquely grants them the capacity not just to tell the stories of their lives in the living of them, but to interweave their own life-stories with those of human and nonhuman others into a Story for the world. This Story is, in effect, an ever-unfolding conversation, and the special responsibility of humans is to open it respectfully to beings of every possible kind" (Ingold, Afterword in Pinxten 2024).

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