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Peruvian Quechua Poetry (1993-2008): Cultural Agency in Central Andes¹

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¹ This article is based on a presentation which took place at the Symposium: "The Global Script of Indigenous Identities: Local Literacies, Oral Languages, and the Written Word". Michigan State University, East Lansing, October 30, 2008. The introduction and consolidation of neoliberalism in Peru was carried out by several democratic governments during the last two decades of the twentieth century. Although the political parties have collapsed, new social movements mobilized, defending their own social agendas. Among them, Amazonian, Aymara and Quechua Movements started to organize independently in a micropolitical strategy. The celebration and condemnation of the quincentenary of Christopher Columbus' arrival in the Americas in 1492 contributed to their development. Foundations and international organizations supported indigenous movements' condemnations of this date, with many organizations making economic aid contingent upon governments' planning economic and social programs for indigenous peoples. In this way, government offices and NGOs had to develop specific programs for ethnic groups. Without their integration it would have been impossible to receive loans and donations. At the same time, indigenous agency, known as globalization from below, had broken national boundaries. Indigenous immigrants have also contributed to the consolidation of their communities and the emergence of new cultural practices abroad and in their places of origin.

In recent decades there has been a diminishing of linguistic and cultural diglossia between Quechua and Spanish in the Central and Southern Peru that has made possible the establishment of permanent centers of Quechua literary activity. In the Southern region, the cities of Arequipa, Cuzco, and Puno stand out with literary workshops. In the central region, the cities of Ayacucho, Huanta, Huancayo, and Huancavelica have become more visible. It could be said that a Quechua literary renaissance has been taking place. Indeed, there have been poetry jams, literary prizes and the publishing of Quechua literature by public and private institutions. In addition, there are individual efforts that have contributed to the increase of a Quechua literary corpus. The Quechua writer Porfirio Meneses commended some of these initiatives when, in 2000, he thanked Julio Noriega, Cesar Itier and Abelardo Oquendo for their contributions to the formation of a Quechua literary canon with their respective volumes of poetry, testimonies and plays. “This work—indicates Meneses—will help our countrymen to be proud of their language as it has a bright future” (214).

The emergence and consolidation of a Quechua literary tradition, as indicated by the linguists Hornberger and Coronel-Molina, is the most important factor in Quechua’s becoming a prestige language (2004:36). However, the maintenance and renewal of a literary tradition are not the only features necessary to achieve this goal. The government and the people should also be involved in designing cultural and educational policies that upgrade and officially recognize Quechua as a second language of Peruvian citizens.

The Quechua Literary corpus is notable in that, in contrast with the literatures of the Mesoamerican region, there is not a continuous production of novels or short stories. However, there are a few Quechua writers that have begun to produce prose in Quechua. According to César Itier,

algunos escritores del quechua han producido también creaciones literarias absolutamente originales, que no retoman motivos de la tradición oral. Hasta hoy [1999] han sido tres José Oregón Morales, Porfirio Meneses Lazón y Macedonio Villafán Broncano. Nadie, antes de ellos había intentado ese tipo de empresa y sus creaciones abren nuevos derroteros para la literatura quechua. Parece incluso

que estamos presenciando el surgimiento de un nuevo tipo de literatura en ese idioma. Si este proceso siguiera desarrollándose, esa literatura le daría al quechua una riqueza, un prestigio y una visibilidad decisivos para su futuro. Este idioma, hasta hoy muchas veces desvalorizado, adquiriría una mayor dignidad cultural en el mundo urbano. (1999: 41)²

In my view, the lack of Quechua fiction has occurred because contemporary Quechua writers have chosen poetry as a literary medium of expression, continuing a long tradition established in the sixties by, among others, Andrés Alencastre, César Guardia Mayorga y José María Arguedas. Today, there is an active group of Quechua poets who have produced interesting works. These include, Porfirio Meneses, who has written poetry and some short stories. He has also translated Cesar Vallejo's poetry from Spanish to Quechua. William Hurtado de Mendoza, who under the government of Velasco Alvarado in the seventies endorsed Quechua linguistic and cultural policies, has published Quechua poetry and a critical work titled, *Poesía quechua diglósica* (1994) where he talks about these cultural, political and literary experiences. A second generation of Quechua writers that includes Dida Aguirre, Eduardo Ninamango and Isaac Huamán emerged in the 80's and 90's. More than fiction and narrative, they have written poetry in Quechua.

But why do these Quechua writers choose the poetic genre as a weapon of cultural and political form of empowerment? In general, literature in Quechua or Spanish, the dominant language, is an art that does not generate significant income or prestige in contemporary Peru. This happens because the literary industry in the country remains weak in comparison to other media. In addition, the Peruvian government does not have cultural policies that promote reading, writing and publishing of books. Because of this situation, poetry in Spanish is considered a minor

² There are Quechua writers who have also produced completely original literary creations. Until now, there have been three: José Oregón Morales, Porfirio Meneses Lazón and Macedonio Villafán Broncano. Nobody before them had tried to carry out that kind of work and their creations open new avenues for Quechua literature. It seems that we are witnessing the emergence of a new type of literature in that language. If this process continues its development, that literature would give to Quechua richness, prestige and decisive visibility for its future. This language, which has been belittled would acquire a major cultural dignity in the urban world.

genre. We can affirm that it is the less popular and understood literary genres because of its complexity. That is, for the most part, readers of poetry do not have a grounding of reading strategies that can allow them to better grasp what is expressed in poetry. Moreover, the fact that several writers decide to write in Quechua is also problematic since literacy in Quechua is not widespread. The government has not yet instituted educational policies that promote the learning of precolumbian languages. Despite these limitations, if we interpret this move to appropriate poetry from the perspective of indigenous writers, we can understand that there are some good reasons why they chose poetry to develop and organize a transformational social literary movement.

To begin with, Quechua writers are aware that because poetry is a “minor” genre, it is subject to less control and surveillance, a circumstance that may allow possibilities to forge political alternatives. In Peru, most cultural institutions privilege testimonial writing and compilations of the oral indigenous traditions. Together with the Peruvian government’s neglect for poetry, this situation creates better opportunities to bring about indigenous agency. Indeed, unlike testimonial writing, poetry allows Quechua writers to explore their indigenous subjectivity from their own creative poetic voice. Quechua writers, for instance, feel that testimonial writings don’t belong to them since they have been transcribed and elaborated by third parties with utilitarian goals in mind, in particular the preservation of a millenarian cultural legacy. Poetry, in this sense, becomes a useful vehicle to better explore Quechua identity. Following this line of thought, Jean Franco points out that poetry “best stages the versatility and beauty of languages and suggests the emergence of a new kind of indigenous subjectivity” (Franco 2005: 461-462). Moreover, a poetic discourse is more related to orality. Since the medieval ages, poetry has been conceived as an art of verbal creation. Therefore, it is a genre to be recited and not read, a characteristic that makes poetry a versatile tool in the struggle for change as it can be read in front of a big audience made up of Quechua listeners. Consequently, one can argue that the construction of a Quechua literature is carried out in poetry. We also have to remember that this move to appropriate poetry is nothing new. Other Peruvian

Quechua writers like José María Arguedas, Eduardo Ninamango Mallqui, and Fredy Roncalla, also chose poetry to intervene in the public sphere and struggle for their political rights.

This emerging Quechua literature is part of a new indigenous social movement organized within the context of cultural and linguistic diglossia. Doris Sommer points out that “Throughout the Americas, culture is a vehicle for agency” (2). After giving several examples in which different cultural practices have brought political and social changes for the oppressed, Sommer offers an explanation of how culture contributes to change:

Culture enables agency. Where structures or conditions can seem intractable, creative practices add dangerous supplements that add angles for intervention and locate room for maneuver. Social movements have learned this and occasionally taught it to social scientists. (3)

Some critics point out that in comparison to Bolivia or Ecuador, Peru lacks a strong indigenous social movement to create a political and social agenda that benefits its citizens and challenges neoliberalism. There is an incipient awareness of the articulation between culture and politics. According to the anthropologist Rodrigo Montoya, who, at the first conference of the Coordinadora Andina de Organizaciones Indígenas (CAOI) in July 2006, stated that indigenous leaders recognize cultural agency’s force to promote political and social change. He adds that while in Bolivia and Ecuador indigenous movements have focused on politics, in Peru cultural agency has been the focus. Literature in this sense serves to criticize and defend communities, for instance, from mining corporations. Indigenous leaders were finding that in the Andes, the Amazon and the Coast of Peru, many groups brought up issues related to their languages and cultures, aspects that are central in the poetry. Based on this, these leaders decided to go further than issues of unionization and include cultural and linguistic issues in their plans (2006: 4).

In analyzing the individual agency of Peruvian Quechua poets in a context where they connect with the emergence of a new indigenous social movement, the creation of an international civil society, and the production of indigenous literatures, I will develop two lines of analysis. The first one

addresses the construction of the poetic subjectivity of the poets, who conceive of themselves as agents of the new social movement. The second line proposes to explore how these poets contribute to the organization of the indigenous movement with their works. I will concentrate on writers who have published their books in bilingual Quechua-Spanish editions in the last twenty five years. To see the changes that have occurred in the literary institutionalization in Quechua in different historical and sociocultural contexts, I will compare two groups of active poets that have emerged to form a “new Quechua poetry” canon.

The new Quechua poetry started to become visible in the eighties. It is a literary trend that differs from singing and signorial Quechua traditions. According to Martín Lienhard this poetry,

coincide... con las profundas modificaciones de la relación entre las comunidades quechuas y la sociedad global. Las comunidades se ven invadidas por la economía mercantil y capitalista, como también por la educación escolar. Al mismo tiempo, ellas—o sus representantes—inundan las ciudades y la capital nacional, llegando incluso a convertirlas, de espacios urbanos o ‘metropolitanos’, en aglomeraciones casi aldeanas o ‘andinas’. Es en este contexto urbano moderno, no en el de la vieja tradición quechua *misti*, que va surgiendo, muy poco a poco, una poesía quechua escrita que nada o poco tiene que ver con la poesía peruana contemporánea en español, pero que tampoco sigue la tradición de los poemas cantados. Aunque todavía marginal, esta poesía podría llegar a ser, según las opciones político-culturales que se vayan imponiendo, una de las expresiones más significativas de los sectores urbanos andinos o de origen andino. (Lienhard 1991: 285)³

The first group of Quechua poets is composed by Eduardo Ninamango Mallqui (1947-), Dida Aguirre (1953-), and Isaac Huamán Manrique (1959-) who became known in the 80’s and 90’s (Noriega 1993; Lienhard 1991; 1998). The second one is integrated by Fredy Amilcar Roncalla

³ “Coincides ... with the in-depth modifications of the relationship between Quechua communities and global society. The communities are invaded by merchant and capitalist economies and formal education. At the same time, they—or their citizens—flood the cities and the national capital, converting them into “Andean” agglomerations. It is here, in this modern, urban context and not in the traditional Quechua *misti*, that there emerges little by little a written Quechua poetry that does not have a relationship with contemporary Peruvian poetry in Spanish, nor does it follow the tradition of singing poems aloud. Although marginal at present, with the framing of new political and cultural choices it could become one of the more meaningful expressions of urban Andean populations or those of Andean origin.”

(1953-), Odi Gonzáles (1962-), and Chaska Eugenia Anka Ninawaman (1973-) who originally published their poems in Quechua. The translations of their works to Spanish appeared, respectively, in 1996, 2002 and 2004.

The priority of the first group was to revindicate their regional identity. Eduardo Ninamango Mallqui, for instance, highlights his Junín origin through his poetry, whereas Dida Aguirre and Isaac Huamán identify themselves as poets from the small city of Huancavelica.⁴ These poets write in Quechua with the purpose of advocating politically for the populations from their regions, and contrasting their depictions to the Peruvian centralism of cities like Lima. In this sense, they carry on a writing practice of previous writers, like José María Arguedas, who focused on the indigenous experiences from the vantage point of rural areas. Jean Franco points out that “written poetry in Peruvian Quechua has often been written by bilingual intellectuals who are not indigenous but have defended Quechua in a gesture of defiance against the hegemony of Lima” (2005: 464). In doing so, these writers stake out a contradictory position. Centralism also made them migrate to the city in order to continue their education at the university level, and to get permanent jobs. Aguirre, Huamán y Ninamango Mallqui studied at the University of San Marcos in Lima. Aguirre has since returned to her native province to work at the University Daniel Alcides Sánchez Carrión of Cerro de Pasco. Huamán works at the National School of Folklore José María Arguedas, and Ninamango Mallqui teaches at the University of Sacred Heart in Lima.

Fredy Roncalla, Odi Gonzáles and Chaska Anka Ninawaman’s experiences have dovetailed with new forms of activism and cultural agency, similar to what is described by the anthropologist María Elena García:

Activists have begun pointing to the emergence of what they call ‘transnational Quechua literature.’ Highlighting the international prestige and diffusion of their language, activists point to the

⁴ In his efforts to assert his regional identity, in his activities as cultural promoter, Isaac Huamán was the editor of an anthology of Huancavelica literature: *La voz del trueno y el arco iris: literatura de Huancavelica* (2000).

increasing number of Peruvian intellectuals in the United States, self-styled indigenous, Andean, or Quechua, who began writing 'self-ethnographies' (Coronel-Molina 1999b), and to develop and examine concepts such as 'Andean archipelagos' (Zevallos 2002), and postmodern Andean Poetry. (Roncalla 1998) (García 2005: 147)

Contrary to generations of Quechua writers in former decades, the poets who write in Quechua in the nineties adopt a mestizo-Quechua identity. As indicated above, the Quechua self-representation of the poets who write in runasimi did not occur them, rather they emphasized their rural experiences.

In contrast to the first group, Roncalla, Gonzáles, and Anka Ninawaman had different migration routes. Roncalla was born in Chalhuanca, Apurimac, and migrated to the city when he was a teenager. He first went to Cañete, and later to Lima to continue his education at the high school and university level. After dropping out of the university, he migrated to the US and resumed his higher education. Gonzáles and Anka Ninawaman were born in neighboring villages in the Department of Cuzco. They did not establish themselves in Lima, but rather migrated to more urban centers near Cuzco. Anka Ninawaman left her town of Yauri-Espinar to work as a servant when she was seven years old in the city of Arequipa, and later moved to the city of Cuzco where she started her formal education. Gonzáles also went to Arequipa to complete his high school studies. Anka Ninawaman got a bachelor's in education at the University San Antonio Abad del Cuzco and Gonzáles a degree in industrial engineering at the University San Agustín de Arequipa. Before traveling abroad, both poets got jobs in these same cities. Anka Ninawaman was a translator from Quechua to Spanish and a research assistant at the NGO Pukllasunchis. Gonzáles was a professor and cultural promoter in his *alma mater*. Abroad, Ch'aska Anka Ninawaman got a Master's degree in Ethnic Studies at FLACSO (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales) in Ecuador (2002-2004), and currently works as a Quechua instructor at the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO), Paris. Gonzáles is an ABD at the University of Maryland, College Park and has worked as a Quechua specialist at the Smithsonian Institute, National Geographic, and National Foreign Language Center at University of

Maryland. He currently teaches Quechua at the Center for Latin American Studies at NYU.

This group of poets has used Quechua as cultural and ethnic capital in different ways and years of their lives. Unlike in other countries, the Quechua self affirmation has been made through the knowledge of the Quechua language. This happens because there is not an official racialization policy of in Peru. Roncalla's bilingual Quechua and Spanish identity made his migration to the US possible. He was hired as a translator by the anthropologist Jane Marie Isbell at Cornell University. He learned to speak and write in English during his several years in residence in Ithaca, New York. Afterwards, he started to write poems in English and a testimonial narrative about his life experience. In the Autumn of '92, when The Columbus Quincentennial was celebrated, Roncalla was involved in the organization of several events. In a multimedia spectacle in which the organizers tried to make visible the Andean presence in New York City, Roncalla read his poems in English and Quechua.⁵ Many months later, after affirming his tricultural and trilingual identity, Roncalla started producing poetry in the three languages. His poetry is written in Andean Spanish, English and Quechua ("Free Traditions..."). Roncalla embraces his diverse identities by rejecting the idea that he is only a person. Instead, he recognizes the dialectic synthesis of three cultures. He considers that his body hosts three persons who think, feel and perform according to the context in which the individual, Fredy Roncalla, finds himself. On any given day, he can speak, think, and feel in Quechua, Spanish, and English, depending on the various contexts in which he moves. His condition as an immigrant was acknowledged in the title of his book of essays, *Escritos mitimaes. Hacia una época andina postmoderna* (1998). *Mitimaes* is the Spanish rendering of the Quechua word *mitmakuna* used in the Tawantinsuyo. The *mitimaes* were rebel ethnic groups which was displaced by the Incas with the purpose of unrooting them, neutralizing their rebellious attitude and colonizing strategic geographical places. Besides Roncalla's knowledge of Quechua, his ethnic features allowed him to

⁵ The most important presentation took place in the *Nuyorican Poet's cafe* of Lower East Side, Fall '92.

perform a Quechua identity in the US. Taking advantage of the American politics of racialization, Roncalla has applied for grants for Native Americans through organizations such as the Indigenous Research Center of the Americas (IRCA) at UC Davis, and has participated as a Quechua writer in several events.

For her part, Anka Ninawaman's use of Quechua as an ethnic marker allowed her to be a part of the organization of student movements at the University of Cuzco. Her public performances and the reading of her work in Quechua helped her secure a job as a Quechua-Spanish translator. It should also be mentioned that her dissertation, "Oral Literature in Choquecancha School Lares" (2004), was written in Quechua in fulfillment of her academic degree in education. However, her request to defend her project in her native language embarrassed the university administration since none of the committee members was fluent enough in Quechua to discuss with the candidate. The University, however, eventually solved the impasse by inviting the American ethnolinguist, Bruce Mannheim, who, coincidentally, was doing research on the teaching of Quechua in Cusco, to be part of Anka Ninawaman's committee.

Odi Gonzáles's use of Quechua is different from that of Anka Ninawaman. Gonzáles, in his adult life, first built a reputation as a poet in Spanish before traveling abroad to continue his Ph.D studies in Latin American Literature. He published the following books of poems in Spanish: *Valle sagrado* (1993), *Almas en pena* (1998) and *La escuela de Cusco* (2005). In 1992, he won the National "César Vallejo" Poetry Prize, promoted by the newspaper *El Comercio* of Lima, and later that year, he also won the National Poetry Award from the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos in Lima. It is abroad where he has made public the Quechua part of his mestizo identity, particularly with the publication of his first book in Quechua, *Tunupa* (2002). Gonzáles self-identifies as mestizo-quechua. He recognizes that the most important part of his cultural identity is his indigenous part.⁶ Gonzáles declares: "In fact, at the formal level, I

⁶ Fredy Roncalla theorizes on this subjectivity as well. He says: "Debemos aprender a hablar de la cuestión indígena en primera persona, de la cuestión del mestizo en primera persona y de la cuestión de la blanquitud en primera persona."

have only one book in Quechua [Tunupa], but the content of the rest [of my publications] is Quechua, andino, mestizo. Bilingual editions are the alternative or solution. If I publish only in Quechua, who would read me?" [En efecto, a nivel de formas tengo un solo libro en Quechua [Tunupa], pero el contenido del resto es enteramente quechua, andino, mestizo. Las ediciones bilingües son la alternativa. De publicar solamente en Quechua, ¿quién me leería?] (personal communication).

Currently these three poets have become the representatives of Peruvian Quechua poetry, and as such, they participate in international events. They practice a linguistic essentialism to mark their indigenous authenticity and legitimize themselves.⁷ Nevertheless, Anka Ninawaman uses additional ethnic markers. She wears long hair down to her waist and dresses in ethnic traditional clothes from her community. She also adopted the old writer's habit of assigning herself pen names (Noriega 1994), but with different identification goals. Her birth name is Eugenia Carlos Ríos, but she now uses a Quechua nickname to recover a lost and usurped identity. She explains her pen name by indicating its translation to Spanish. That is, she recovered her mother parents' last names, which were lost in the Spanish genealogy by the second generation. First, she underscores her identification with her town (*ayllu*) as an important collective reference: "My official name is Eugenia Carlos Ríos. But I am Ch'aska Anka Ninawaman. For myself: Ch'aska (Morning Star). From my father, Anka

Es decir, si soy mestizo, ¿debo sólo considerar el lado 'blanco' de la mezcla o me es más importante el lado indígena y esa es mi opción" [We must learn to speak about the indigenous question in the first person, the question of mestizo in the first person and the question of whiteness in the first person. That is, if I do I only consider my mestizo side 'white' or, more importantly, I mix the Indian side and that's my choice] (2006: 4).

⁷ Odi Gonzáles participated as a Quechua poet to read his poems and lectures on Quechua poetry at "II Festival of Poetry: Language of America," October 12, 2006, organized by the late Carlos Montemayor in Mexico City. He also participated in the XVI International Poetry Festival of Medellín, June 24 to July 2, 2006, and the XIX International Book Fair, November 26 to December 4, 2005, in Guadalajara. Ch'aska Ninawaman Anka was invited to the 6th International Meeting of Poets, "Poetry and Violence," Coimbra, 24-27 May 2007, the First International Congress of Peruvian Poetry, November 21-24 November 2006, Madrid, and "The EARTH Symposium: Breaking New Ground," April 28-May 2, 2004 in Vancouver, Canada.

(eagle). From my mother, Ninawaman (Fire Hawk). All of my names are from my rebellious Quechua town [Chisicata]" (7).

It is noteworthy that Roncalla, Gonzáles, and Anka Ninawaman assume their Quechua identity and the construction of poetic personas consciously. As such, they acknowledge the talent and creativity of Quechua writers in an unmediated fashion. This is important given that historically this identity, as it manifests itself in testimonial narratives, has been mediated by non-indigenous writers or intellectuals.

In the following paragraphs, I will comment Fredy Roncalla's trilingual poems, Odi Gonzáles' *Tunupa* (2002), and Ch'aska Eugenia Anka Ninawaman's *Poesía en quechua. Ch'askaschay* (2004).⁸

Roncalla's trilingual poems are composed of fragments of *huaynos* (Andean music genre in Spanish and Quechua). They evoke Andean memories in English, Quechua, and Spanish. The result is a collage of verses in three languages that recreates the process of creating a poem ("Tradiciones, libres traducciones"). According to Roncalla, the verses were originally written in Quechua because this language is considered his original language, related to his primary identity and feelings. He writes in English because it is associated with learning new knowledge, which in turn evokes new emotions. The poem "Muyurina", for instance, evokes an emblematic place, an imaginary town in Ayacucho. The poem generates associations with other less remote places, experiences and emotions. This is a poem that reveals automatic writing as a strategic expression. The verses in English, Quechua, and Spanish are intercalated. The poetic voice acknowledges that he has felt, and lived experiences in three cultures and languages during his lifetime.⁹

⁸ Gonzáles has published his poems in a trilingual edition: Spanish, Quechua and English. They appear in the exhibition's catalog as photographic collages *Virgenes urbanas / urban virgins* [2007] by the Peruvian photographer Ana de Orbegoso, 12-34. The poems allude to each of the photographs that are part of the exhibit.

⁹ To get an idea of these poems, here are the first five verses of *Traducciones libres*: "CINCO urpillay/ arwi chuqcha/ FLORES tika/ NECESITO Tikaylla tika/ after the golden flight/ your silence floats/ on the wells of sound/ the nameless my love."

Anka Ninawaman's *Poesía en quechua* includes forty-three poems in Quechua and their translations into Spanish. The poems are divided into six sections titled: "Sirinita Apumallkumanta/Mythical beings, stars, sirens, condors and flying vicuñas", "Yuyaysapa misichakunamanta/About wild cats and pumas"; "Inkantuyupuq llaqtakunamanta/About mountains and cities"; "Mama Kukachamanta/About mother coca and sacred foods"; "Huk Vidamanta Kundinarumantawan/About other lives, witchcrafts, and condenados"; "Vida vidachamanta/About little shots, love and life."

Anka Ninawaman's poetry evokes popular Quechua speech and aims to represent a collective voice. She conceives her book as an imaginary place where several voices express daily situations and common feelings. The introduction of her book was written by her parents and it appeals to Quechua readership. It begins: "Dear sisters and brothers, Quechua like us" (14). They later add, "in these moments, our daughter Ch'askita, with her thoughts and feelings, makes our hearts feel very happy... In 'Apu mallku', 'Yuyaysapa Pumacha', 'Wanp'uli ch'iwaracha.' 'Kundinaru' and in all the pretty poems, our lives, dances, fears, laughs are written" (14). Her poems also speak to the experiences of the people from her community. For instance, the footnote of the poem "Perdiduna rikukuni" reads: "This poem belongs to Don Florencio Carlos Anka" (134). In another instance, a male voice speaks about his daily life in the community (145). In addition, she evokes the experiences of Quechuas who have migrated to the cities. In her poems, Quechuas leave their towns due to hunger, poverty, and the search to overcome these situations by establishing themselves in cities like Cuzco or Lima. In her reconstruction of popular imagery, she evokes Andean elements such as coca, condenado, wakcha, sirenas, and Kukuli. In thematizing the new experiences of Quechuas in the city, she refers to consumption as the main foundation of the neoliberal order. The runas listen to *tecnocumbia* (musical genre that fusions techno, cumbia and huayno) while they drink low quality alcohol to neutralize maladaptation and depression.¹⁰ They wear western clothes and disrespect their mothers.¹¹

¹⁰ See her poems: "Wanp'uli ch'iwaracha"/"Mala fe traguito" (158-162), and "Rusi War tragucha" / "Rosi War traguito" (164-165).

¹¹ ("Mama kutipakuqkuna" / "Niños malcriados", 106-107).

Instead of being concerned with the negative changes, she trusts that Quechuas have their own regulating social mechanisms that do not allow the abandonment of the community, family, customs, and values. One could say that Anka Ninawaman highlights change as a cultural strategy that is indispensable to survival. In other words, she does not advocate for a pristine, uncontaminated Quechua culture, rather, she accepts the linguistic loans from Spanish that Quechua makes. This position allows her to position herself against purist stances that in favor of a pure Incan Quechua that disregards linguistic loans (Anka Ninawaman 2005: 165-166). For instance, she legitimizes, the use of the term *vidaschay* (my beautiful life) because it records the urban experience of Quechuas, and rejects the word *Kawsay* proposed by the purists.¹² The language of this poem and many more could be labeled as Andean Spanish or “quechuanish” since it mixes both languages. Like Roncalla, Anka Ninawaman would acknowledge that certain experiences are linked to the language where they take place.

Odi Gonzáles' book *Tunupa / The book of sirens* (2002) contains ten poems in Quechua, Spanish and English.¹³ He did his own translations from Quechua to Spanish, and Alison Krogel and José Ramón Ruisánchez translated them into English. Most of the poems in the book are love poems. The book is structured as a cosmopolitan poetic subject's traveling

¹² See her poem: “Vida bidascha” / “Vida vidita” (166-167).

¹³ Many chroniclers have recounted the mishaps of Tunupa, the god pertaining to the mythical cycle of Viracocha. The youngest son of Pachayachachic—the Maker and Organizer of the precolombian world—Tunupa was the defiant and dissonant child, the antihero who “in every way was contrary to his father.” Ordered to journey to the Center of the World—perhaps Cusco—his duty was to initiate men in the agricultural labors and cults of his father. Instead, he preferred to travel to other lands. This act of disobedience provoked the wrath of the powerful Viracocha Pachayachachic, who ordered his other children to throw the rebellious son—hands and feet bound—into the waters of Lake Titicaca. His powers and authority taken away, scorned by his own lineage, and now a mere mortal, Tunupa began a difficult pilgrimage across the windswept plains and prairies of the Andes. It was during these wanderings that Tunupa was received by the twins Umantuu and Quesintuu, the first sirens in Andean mythology. At the bottom of Lake Titicaca, Tunupa lived with the sirens, thus marking the origin of underwater fauna. Tunupa is a myth deeply rooted in the traditional lore throughout vast regions of Peru and Bolivia, and is also the name given to many mountains that represent this god who chose love over power. By arbitrarily interpolating (mythical) times and places with personal experiences, this book attempts to recreate the exile Tunupa underworld, far from his kingdom and lineage (51).

notes on places such as Brooklyn, New York; College Park and Mount Rainier, Maryland, Chinchero, Ollantaytambo, and Pisac, Chilcaloma, Cajamarca, Uros, Taquile, Kollao in Puno, and Pachacamac, Lima. The poetic voice in these love poems conceives of the woman as a savior. He is mesmerized by his lovers' exuberant female bodies and the mothers that he observes on his trips. Poems like "Tus rebasantes senos de turbia leche" and "Un tropel de jabalíes hozaba tus pechos mamaría madre", where he evokes his lover's breasts can be understood as fertility symbols. He also dedicates poems to female body attributes: birth delivery, and lactation, as well as to the daily care of children. According to the poet, his purpose in *Tunupa* was to associate the woman's body with *pachamama* (mother Earth) as life givers.

González' poetry is more academic and cultured in comparison to Roncalla's and Anka Ninawaman's. These poets represent at least two types of the latest Quechua poetry. Although they speak and write in a dialect of Quechua called *cuzqueño*, Anka Ninawman's poetry is an example of popular register, while González' displays a more cultured one. When González speaks about Quechua gods like Tunupa and mythical beings like sirens he takes advantage of a specialized knowledge of Quechua culture he has acquired. González' comments about this issue in the introduction to his book. His goal is to connect a mythology, like Tunupa and sirens, to the poetic subject and the protagonists—in this case female—he creates. In other words, the poetic voice is conceived of as a rebel subject, a carrier of Quechua culture through his poems. Rather than learning about the world, he is interested in exploring it. He is not interested in power, but rather women's love in order to impregnate them. Consequently, he emphasizes the female body as a giver of life and a protector of children. Nevertheless, this chosen path is not an easy one. After being expelled from his place of origin, the poet gets depressed, becomes sick, and implores a siren to save him ("Umantuu", 11-12).

Besides Quechua cosmology, *Tunupa* also has Western cultural and thematic references. In its evocation of themes such as exile, the book displays similarities to Homer's *The Odyssey*. However, González includes a Quechua worldview. While the *Odyssey*'s sirens destroy men, in Umantuu

the siren is a savior. Regarding cultural references, Gonzáles's poem "Yacana" (25) alludes to the Quechua constellation Yacana, which is located between the Western constellations of Scorpio and Sagittarius. In other words, *Tunupa's* poems are directed to an educated reader in English and/or Spanish who has an academic knowledge of Inca and contemporary Quechua cultures as well as the Western literary canon.

In the exploration of the biographies, poems and books of Roncalla, Gonzáles, and Anka Ninawaman we can see that there is a democratization of the production of Quechua poetry. Mestizo and Quechua poets whose lives are part of globalization articulate the experiences of their daily lives in Peru and abroad through their poetry. In Roncalla and Anka Ninawaman's cases, certain feelings and experiences are associated with the places where they occur. In Gonzáles' case there is a loyalty to a primordial language and culture. Although, the three poets come from remote villages, they articulate different poetic styles. Roncalla's poems reveal a trilingualism and triculturalism of a poetic subject who can know and move within three cultures. He is able to express his experiences and feelings in each of the three languages.

Anka Ninawaman's poems convey the image of an organic intellectual who represents her family and community and denounces the deplorable situation of Quechua people under neoliberalism. She aims to reclaim the cultural identities of urban Quechua subjects. In this way she reveals the hybrid identity and behavior of the Quechuas, in general, and the life of a poor urban woman in the age of neoliberalism in particular. As regards Gonzáles, he appropriates a Quechua archive, rejects Hispanisms and uses the well known Tunupa myth to give voice to the sorrows and individual observations of a cosmopolitan mestizo-Quechua subject who perceives the world in an Andean way.

The worldview in these three cases is more historical than cosmic. Absent are topics such as Pachacuti, Inkari or the black rainbow that are in the works of the first generation of poets like Ninamango, Aguirre and Huamán. Of note too is the fact that the poets studied in this article have different economic and social backgrounds. Nevertheless, all of them share the following: they all have university degrees and they migrated to urban

centers to complete them. Most of them have been teachers or professors. These commonalities lead me to conclude with at least two reflections. First, they are aware of the problems they face. Their occupations—as teachers and professors—made them excellent cultural agents to revalue their culture and reclaim their rights as Quechua citizens. Thanks to internal and transnational migrations, they have been able to climb the social ladder. Second, most of them are trapped in the paradoxes that the neoliberal order has created through multiculturalism, specifically the conceptualization of representation in a democratic society that George Yúdice has noted in his reflection on the testimonio. In our case study, the poets denounce exclusion, marginalization, and poverty of the Quechua communities in Peru. They also speak out in defense of their communities and become examples to follow. But there is a problem. These Quechua poets share a citizenship status with other hegemonic groups. They are a select group that may, conceivably, allow for the prosperity of all. Yet this only confirms that in neoliberal societies individuals can excel but not entire communities (Yúdice 1992: 213).

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