“Mobilizing Development Alternatives: The Engagement of Sumaq Kawsay, or ‘Harmonious Living’ in the Peruvian Andes”

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by

Sammi Bennett

OXFORD DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOUSE

OXFORD UNIVERSITY

Green Templeton College (Slytherin)

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Acknowledgements: A Heart-felt Love Letter

Brace yourselves!! This thesis has been a journey of a lifetime. I could have never imagined myself a student at Oxford, let alone writing a 100+ page piece of work that weaves together my deepest curiosities about how humans relate to the living, breathing, and very much animated world. This experience has been challenging in so many ways, and yet I have thoroughly enjoyed the process of research and writing. Perhaps I am an exception to the rule, but this process has been illuminating for me as I have learned that research is all about relationships. It is with this ethos that I have fully embedded myself as a part of this thesis, because I believe social research cannot be objective or bias-free. My history and personality are woven throughout this piece. Even if the examiners at Oxford do not appreciate my creative work, I have fundamentally enjoyed exercising a "radical" approach to development studies work in my methodology, but also in the content of my very thesis as I study alternatives to the development. Post submission, I reflect on all of the humans and non-humans who have been a part of this journey with me and who have supported me along the way. First, I would like to thank my eccentric supervisor, Laura Rival, a defender of all life on Earth. Whenever I walked into Laura's office I was greeted with tea or the smells of happy plants. Whenever I walked out of Laura's office, I was thinking about something differently, challenged and inspired. Laura cared for my well-being and nurtured my curiosities and creative dreams. I thank my coursemates, who mostly stressed me out, but also who challenge me and love me for who I am. I will always be grateful for this diverse group of friends who wish to contribute to a more just world. I am forever thankful for that fateful day at Third Wave Coffee Roasters in Bangalore, when I met one of my life-long best friends. I'd like to thank Zaakir, who followed me all the way to Oxford from Bangalore (hehe). It's been an absolute joy to grow with you and witness your brilliance. Buen Vivir Baby!! I also note my relationships with Nikhil, Stella, Pati, Anusha, Abi, Lara, Simon, and Clement, I cherish

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List of Abbreviations

ANDES	Asocación Andes
BCH	Biocultural Heritage
BV	Buen Vivir (Good Living)
CP	Chalakuy Maiz (Corn) Park
IBC	Instituto del Bien Común
IBCHT	International Biocultural Heritage Territory
IIED	International Institute of Environment and Development
MOC	Ministry of Culture
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PP	Potato Park
CBC	Centro Bartolome de las Casas
SK	Sumaq Kawsay (Harmonious Living)
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Quechua Terms

Apus	Mountain spirits
Ayllu	Community land holding
Auqui ayllu	Community of mountains/ Apus
Ayni	Reciprocity
Chacra	Plots where Andean families grow their food
Chalay	Exchange, based on ayni
Chalyplasa	Barter market
Chicha	fermented corn drink
Chuno	Dehydrated potato
Moraya	Dehydrated potato
Papa	Potato
Papa Huatay	Potato Tying
Pachamama	Mother Earth
Runa ayllu	Community of people
Salqa ayllu	Community of animals and plants

Abstract

BV is the Spanish translation of the Quechan concept "Sumaq Kawsay", or "harmonious life," representing practical knowledges woven through relational connections between nature and society (Radcliffe, 2012; Villalba, 2013). Some authors have argued that in Peru, Buen Vivir is a political platform through which communities can "articulate social and ecological demands based on Indigenous[1] principles" (Merino, 2016). However, there is little evidence of the practicality of SK specifically, beyond a state co-opted discourse. Thus, I question how SK is understood and engaged by Quechua communities in the Peruvian Andes. I also interrogate how SK is utilized by NGOs whose work seeks to benefit these Quechua groups, by centering traditional practices and furthering biocultural rights. I explore these questions in the context of rapid climactic changes in two field sites named "Biocultural Heritage Territories," (IBCHTs) by Asocación Andes in partnership with local Quechua communities. Through qualitative research based on critical ethnographic observation, interviews, and visual methods, I examine stories of SK from Quechua communities, and how SK has been engaged by NGOs to utilize an "Indigenist" discourse, by valorizing and revitalizing practices, and innovations, rearticulating human-nature relations for outside audiences, and cultivating "ontological diplomacy" (Beling et al., 2018; Hall, 2022). My thesis extends and deepens the theorization of BV/SK as an alternative to development by emphasizing the practicality of SK. I go on to illustrate the importance of alliances between NGOs and Indigenous groups in Peru, whose active collaboration enlists "Good Living" as a political platform that articulates alternative social and ecological demands, valorizing local realities and centering Indigenous politics.

[1] I have chosen to capitalize Indigenous throughout this thesis to instill greater respect.

Chapter 1: Introduction

"We can no longer argue seriously that development can bring justice, sustainability, dignity or a good life" Escobar, 2020, pg. 117).

When I first arrived in Oxford, I picked up a book from the Social Science Library on our pre-reading list, called *Pluriverse: A Post-development Dictionary* that offers different worldviews and practices for an ecologically wise world (Kothari et al., 2019). I sat reading that book in my garden, during the sunny days of mid-September before the start of the MPhil course. Soon after I began to work on my first assessed essay, writing about whether climate change is shifting our long-held development views. Through the writing process, I came to learn about alternatives to development and perspectives from the Global South questioning the mainstream model of progress and accumulation. I became engrossed in the complexity of implementing Buen Vivir and climate justice, and chose to explore more deeply a thread of inquiry fundamental to development studies: *what is development, and what does it mean for different communities?*

Communities and scholars alike are challenging development as a pathway towards the "good life." If development cannot bring justice, sustainability, dignity, or a good life, then what are the alternatives? (Escobar, 2020). In this thesis, I share stories of communities in the Peruvian Andes that are engendering alternatives to development by prioritizing well-being, rather than development for the entire community of life. NGOs in Peru are valorizing Indigenous Knowledge and practices related to harmonious living, through "hopeful coalitions" (Clifford, 2004, pg. 23) built on mutual respect and reciprocity, acknowledging that "ecological restoration is inseparable from cultural and spiritual restoration" (Kimmerer, 2013, pg. 337). A shift in development discourse and practice is sprouting from the bottom-up, roots grounded in the form of alliances between Indigenous and NGOs, with the momentum of the living Earth under their feet.

Figure 1: Looking Towards the Apus (Original photo, July 28th, 2022)

Buen Vivir (BV) or "Good Living", translated from Quechua's "Sumaq Kawsay" is theorized as an alternative to development, used by different actors to "address the limitations of current development theory and development policies and proposes new political paths guided by non-Western principles" (Merino, 2016, pg. 271). BV is constructed as a discourse, with many different strands - the Indigenist, post-development, and social statist - that aims to put forth a vision of development that prioritizes the well-being of people and the planet. Relatedly, Sumaq Kawsay (SK) challenges the dominant development paradigm based on Western conceptualizations of economic growth and progress. Development in the name of SK is rather about maintaining social and ecological harmony. As a practice, SK aims to articulate ways of living that are grounded in respect for ancestral knowledge, including

specific practices, such as agricultural rituals, acts of reciprocity in community (ayni), and economies based on solidarity (Coral-Guerrero et al., 2021). SK provides an opportunity for Indigenous peoples to articulate alternatives that are based on their own cultures and values, and their own ontological and epistemological bases (Cuestas-Caza, 2018). According to Artaraz et al. (2021), "concepts of the good life belonging to alternative epistemic traditions have become central drivers in policy processes designed to radically transform these societies and address people's everyday struggles" (pg. 5). A primary example is Ecuador and Bolivia's constitutional recognition of BV, which marked a significant shift in the discourse around development. This engagement of BV at the state level has created space for the integration of alternative knowledge and practices into development policies and practices. However, it is deeply contested as policies do not follow. As such, "an international community of nongovernmental organizations, activists, and academics has taken an interest in exploring the implications of BV and the processes of policy transformation and debate in the region and beyond" (Artaraz et al., 2021, pg. 5). The discourse and practice of SK continue to be a site of ongoing struggle and negotiation for Indigenous communities in Latin America, a discussion inhabited by many different actors (Artaraz et al., 2021). Focusing on SK emphasizes the capacity of citizens to set their own political agendas (Allen & Thomas, 2021). However, Chassagne (2019) acknowledges that what BV or SK "means in practice, and to whom reamends largely unanalyzed," illustrating an essential gap in the literature (pg. 15).

While BV is heavily studied in Ecuador and Bolivia, little research has been conducted on BV in Peru, specifically from the perspective of Quechua communities in the Andes. Merino (2016) notes the policy implications of BV in Peru and the current political situation in Peru makes the implications of SK even more salient. Thus, the overall objective of this thesis is to illustrate the practicality of SK as a discourse and as a practice in the

communities in the Potato Park and Chalakuy Maiz Park. Both levels of SK are braided together through "hopeful coalitions" with NGOs that defend the interests of Quechua communities by articulating social and ecological demands and making known the practices and politics of SK, to outsiders and international institutions thus constructing alternatives to development (Clifford 2004, pg. 23; Merino, 2016). My argument is developed and deepened through the following structure.

In *Chapter 2: Literature Review,* I begin with an overview of the literature on BV, theorized as an alternative to development. I lay out the different strands of the discourse, noting the importance of which strands are employed and for whom. I lay out the politics and paradoxes of implementing BV and discuss the importance of defending Biocultural Heritage to support Indigenous visions of living well. I close by discussing the relevance of BV/SK for constructing alternatives to development.

In *Chapter 3*: *Research as Relationship: Methodology and Ethical Considerations,* I describe my attempts to adopt aspects of Indigenous research, lay out my case study, and explain the specifics of my data collection and analysis. I close the chapter with a reflection on my positionality and how I will disseminate my research beyond this thesis.

In *Chapter 4: Threads of Harmonious Living,* I share stories from community members in the PP and CP relating to their own visions and practices of SK. I illustrate systems of Andean cultural reference, such as the ayllu system and the chacra system, and values and practices associated with these worldviews. I share evidence from the photo/video project that illuminates how locals interpret the wisdom of plants, in their indication of a good harvest and good life. Lastly, I illustrate how passing down the knowledge of SK has become more difficult in the context of climate change, and how passing down the knowledge of SK is paramount to defending development alternatives.

In *Chapter 5: Braiding Strands of Discourse and Practice*, I show how the discourse of BV/SK is constructed by NGOs in Cusco. Then, I focus closely on ANDES, which mobilizes the Indigenist discourse of SK, under the framework of BCH, to defend the biocultural rights of Indigenous peoples and share alternative ways of relating to the living world. I pinpoint solidarity economies and food sovereignty as key elements of BV, and note related practices revitalized by ANDES like barter and potato rituals. Chapter 5 begins to trace how this family of discursive constructions contrasts with the lived experience and embodied knowledge of Quechua communities, noting the engagement of the discourse and practice of BV for different audiences.

Chapter 6: Weaving Alliances that Defend Lifeways, analyzes the alliances between ANDES and communities living in Indigenous Biocultural Heritage Territories (IBCHTs). It illustrates the cultivation of mutual respect, alliances of Mountain Indigenous Peoples, and the reclamation and revitalization of their knowledge systems. This chapter also illustrates how ANDES attempts to engross visitors in reciprocity with the more-than-human world and share alternative ways of relating to the world with international institutions, instilling ontological diplomacy (Hall, 2022). I enquire more closely how the Indigenist discourse of SK helps to tell stories about the worlds inhabited in both parks and acknowledge SK as constructed through everyday practices, reinstalling pride in Indigeneity, and constructing alternatives to development.

Chapter 7: "The Mountain Is Braiding Itself with Color," considers holistically the previous empirical chapters, offering reflections on limitations to the study and considerations for future research. It also clarifies the novel contribution of this piece of work to the larger conversation of what it means to live harmoniously in the world, provoking critical perspectives within development studies literature.

A Clarification of Terms

Before reading further, I would like to clarify how I employ BV and SK. Some authors consider the terms SK and BV as not synonymous, due to translation errors, and different ontological and epistemological bases (Cuestas-Caza, 2018). Oftentimes, academics write about BV and not of SK, notes Gudynas (2011) as BV braids Andean thought with academic perspectives from deep ecology, ecofeminism, and degrowth, creating a postmodern collage (Cubillo-Guevara et al., 2016; Cuestas-Caza, 2018, pg. 54). I acknowledge that my research experience was not long enough to tackle the great subtleties of discourse, context, and equivocation. However, I generally employ terms: BV when I analyze NGOs and the larger academic/ political discourse, and SK when I refer to ANDES and the contexts of the PP and CP. Additionally, in place of "nature" or the "environment" I use the term, "living world" to engage beyond the separations of humans and nature (Stibbe, 2020). This use of language fits well with the Andean worldview, "in which all entities from rocks and rivers to trees and seeds are imbued with life" (Allen 1988; Apffel-Marglin, 1998; Shepherd, 2005, pg. 38).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

"One elder said, 'this sustainable development sounds to me like they just want to be able to keep on taking like they always have. It's always about taking. You go there and tell them that in our way, our first thoughts are not 'What can we take?" but 'What can we give to Mother Earth?' That's how it's supposed to be" (Kimmerer, 2013, pg. 190).

Introduction

Sustainable development is still engaged in mainstream development discourse, but it sustains development as it is rather than "supporting the flourishing and enduring of an infinitely diverse natural and social life" (Sachs, 1997, p.16). However, BV breaks away from the idea of linear development, recognizing human and non-human entities as part of the community of life (Albó, 2011; Jimenez et al., 2022). BV is the Spanish translation of the Quechua term, Sumaq Kawsay which roughly translates to "life of fullness," or "harmonious life" (Villalba, 2013, pg. 1428). BV integrates Andean conceptions of living well with alternative visions of development emerging from the Western world, adopting different formulations while aspiring to collective well-being through reciprocity and relationally (Gudynas, 2011; Jimenez et al., 2022; Villalba, 2013**)**. According to Vanhulst & Beling (2014) "the capacity of the development paradigm to offer satisfactory responses to the grave social, environmental, and economic challenges of our time is starting to lose ground and is no longer taken for granted" (pg. 61). Furthermore, in the context of rapid ecological destruction, lived experiences of climate change add to the list of critiques of development, which is growing (Allen and Thomas, 2000).

"The concept of vivir bien is an open field of contestation inhabited by multiple actors—Indigenous communities, state institutions, and international policy and academic organizations" (Artaraz et al. 2021, pg. 15). These actors articulate BV for their own purposes, and as such, BV continues to be in construction. According to Walsh (2010), one of

the crucial questions concerning BV is whether it is becoming a co-opted term, functional to the state, but with no hope for transformation. The concept of BV is highly contested in the Latin American continent, specifically in Ecuador and Bolivia, where the term has been co-opted by governments to justify extraction, morphing into a state-led project, straying far from its Indigenous roots (Forero, 2021 & Uzendoski, 2018). Despite tensions in implementing BV, many scholars maintain its potential for transition and transformation by articulating different notions of well-being, valorizing Indigenous knowledges, achieving food sovereignty, and overcoming extractive industries (Beling et al., 2021; Chassagne & Everingham, 2019; Merino, 2020; Svampa, 2019; Villalba, 2013). Additionally, the multiple actors that inhabit the field of BV facilitate the possibility of synergies between such actors, most namely alliances between Indigenous groups and other actors (Merino, 2020). Jimenez et al. (2022) posit that BV led by Indigenous communities engages humans and non-humans in solving the climate crisis (Jackson, 2017; Jimenez 2022).

Peruvian scholar Roger Merino notes that while BV has been historically co-opted by progressive governments in Bolivia and Ecuador, this has not been the case in Peru, offering a theoretically rich case in which to evaluate BV. In Peru, BV is a political platform through which communities can "articulate social and ecological demands based on Indigenous principles" (Merino, 2016, pg. 1). These articulations take place at the level of national organizations according to Roger Merino's research in the Amazon.[2] However, there has been little focus on BV/SK in the Andean region. As such, Peru offers a relevant context in which to study the collective construction of BV because of the emphasis on territorial struggles as a space for collective organization (Merino, 2016; Svampa, 2019). Some scholars posit that the practical meanings of BV remain unanalyzed (Chassagne, 2019). But more importantly, there is little research that focuses on SK, which emerges through Andean

[2] Interview, July 21st, 2022

cultural reference, from the perspective of Indigenous peoples (Coral-Guerrero et al., 2021; Cuestas-Caza, 2018).

Based on the work of Merino (2020), I hypothesized that Peru offers a relevant context to study the capacities of communities to envision the "good life" on their own terms because of the lack of state co-option of BV, offering more space for the adoption of BV/SK by different epistemic communities. Consequently, this thesis seeks to explore BV/SK as both a discourse and a practice by empirically examining how the term has been adopted and engaged by different epistemic communities in the Andean region of Peru to defend the interests of Quechua communities and to construct alternatives to development. The question can be split into two sub-questions:

- *How is SK understood and enacted by Quechua communities in the Peruvian Andes?*
- *How is BV/SK engaged and mobilized by NGOs in Cusco to further biocultural rights and construct alternatives to development?*

The rest of this chapter will outline the proposed project by presenting a review of relevant literature surrounding BV and SK, touching on topical themes and relevant tensions. I justify these questions based on various gaps in the literature concerning the practicality of SK, Indigenous perspectives on SK, and the power of these discourses to defend different models of living and more just socio-ecological futures.

Buen Vivir/ Sumaq Kawsay as Discourse

Discourse plays an important role in moving beyond the dominant development paradigm. Discourses also have a large impact on the stories that we live by (Stibbe, 2020). Shepherd (2005) notes that particular "development organizations are increasingly turning their attention to the potential of local knowledge—it may be particular knowledge of the soils, of climate, of animals and plants, and of the types of practices as well as the social

relations and worldview that accompany that knowledge" (pg. 42). Such considerations are constructed as alternatives to development or post development. BV is situated under these constructs and is employed by different epistemic communities. Hence, BV is a "discourse of transition," (Escobar, 2011) that is "advocating a whole-societal transformation toward global social and ecological sustainability, breaking with the inherently ungeneralizable model of social organization of the modern West" (Beling et al., 2018 pg. 12). Villalba-Eguiluz, & Etxano (2017) identify three main currents of BV: the Indigenous/ Culturalist; the Ecologist/ Post-developmentalist; and the Socialist-statist (refer to Figure 2). Cuestas-Caza (2018) acknowledges that thoughts about BV have evolved within these epistemic communities. There are many different strands of the discourse beyond these, and they are engaged in particular ways by different organizations and communities.

Table 1
Differential elements of the three currents concerning BV.

	Indigenous/Culturalist	Ecologist/Post-developmentalist	Socialist-statist/Eco-Marxist
Epistemology	Ancestral Andean-Amazonian cosmovision	Post-modern	Modern
Terminology	*Sumak kawsay* *Buen convivir* (to coexist well)	*Buen Vivir*	*Buen Vivir* Wellbeing Human development
Priorities	Andean cosmovision (identity and spirituality) Communities' self-government/autonomy	Preservation of nature Localized social emancipation	Recovery of the state Equity and social justice
Nature	Widened living community	Biocentrism. Strong sustainability	Tactic/pragmatic (weak) sustainability
Relation with Development	Alternative to development	Alternative to development	Alternative in development Neo-developmentalism
Principal agent	Peoples and nationalities	Society	State
Strategies	Communitarian (re)construction.	Post-extractivism Collective and participatory transitions	Transformation of the productive matrix Endogenous accumulation Public management

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on Le-Quang and Vercoutere (2013) and Hidalgo-Capitán and Cubillo-Guevara (2014).

Figure 2: Differential Elements of the Three Currents of BV (Beling et al., 2018)

While these currents offer different theoretical lenses through which to understand the tensions of BV, they also share the "need to reconsider the relations between society and nature and establish measures for ecological sustainability" (Villalba-Eguiluz, & Etxano, 2017, pg. 2). According to Artaraz et al. (2021), the Indigenist strand operates from the grassroots, while the neo-Marxist discourse posits a critique of modern capitalism and the post-development strand hopes to create social, economic, and ecological transformation. Beling et al. (2021) assert that the post-development current has received the most attention

and offers strategies for braiding together the best of SK with other visions of social transformation (Cuestas-Caza, 2018). Aligned with the post-development current, Gudynas (2011) expresses how BV offers a chance to collectively construct a new model of development. BV is a common ground where critical perspectives on development meet, interact, thus carving space for alternatives (Gudynas, 2011). BV opens "possibilities for transforming the current political imagination of governments who currently cannot conceive a future without a paradigm of development in which the environment is seen as external to human nature, just a resource to be exploited" (Merino, 2016, pg. 12). Beling et al. (2021) argue that the most important value add from BV is its "politically and culturally subversive character, which produces an epistemic break with dominant languages and mind-frames with open outcomes (pg. 28). As such, BV provides lessons for debates concerning alternative socio-ecological futures and collective well-being. Beling et al. (2018) distinguish BV discourse as the "worldwide first large-scale experiment of discursive articulation of modern and non-modern ontologies" (pg. 19). Indeed, BV is encouraging different epistemic communities to think differently and to consider alternative ways of being in the world, which illuminates why discourse is important. Political upheaval and questioning the mainstream development model are also closely linked to such discourses and processes. According to Huang & Zhao (2021) language is a form of reflection and action, contributing to the changes in the world. Stibbe (2020) notes how language is used to tell stories about the world and argues that beneficial discourses can help imagine and build new forms of society.

SK is an interesting local initiative, though Recasens (2014) cautions that it can become empty of meaning in circumstances in which different groups attribute their own framing for their own purposes. Thus, it is important which strands of the discourse are adopted, for what purposes, and for whom. Moreover, it must be noted that there are power relations embedded within the different strands of BV discourse itself, as while interwoven

with how the discourse is articulated and engaged. Acknowledging this, I touch upon Dempsey (2012)'s reflections on "communicative labor," or the work of representing marginalized groups. She argues that "much research is needed to better understand the politics of their (NGO's) communicative labor, including how nonprofits mobilize discourses, and how these discourses themselves carry their own sets of politics and forms of power (Dempsey, 2012, pg. 49). I acknowledge these complexities but note I did not have the space in this thesis to delve into these intricacies of communicative labor and political translation. This would be well suited for further study on discourses of BV/SK. BV mirrors marginalized voices from the Global South with "global momentum for a discursive shift", but its ambition in programs and policy illustrates its limitations (Beling et al., 2018, pg. 21). I will now move beyond discourse to illustrate BV in practice, both its limitations and potential.

Buen Vivir/ Sumaq Kawsay in Practice

Historically, Latin American governments have utilized BV discourse, co-opting its meaning and rendering it with little power to challenge the neoliberal order, illustrating deeply embedded power differentials (Beling et al. 2018; Echavarría & Orosz, 2021). In this context, I adopt Liverman & Vilas, (2006)'s definition of neoliberalism as a "political philosophy or world view of free markets and less government" noting that the environment is "inextricably linked to neoliberal policies because many economic sectors are directly dependent on the natural environment and because reduced state intervention may mean less environmental regulation" (pg. 33). Liverman & Vilas (2006) acknowledge neoliberalism as a set of processes, and certainly these processes have set the stage for the emergence of BV/SK as an alternative paradigm to privatization and accumulation. According to Maldonando-Vilapando & Paneque-Galvez (2022) "alternatives to development seek to rethink the productive logics and ways of life imposed by the neoliberal developmentalist

paradigm to create new, more just, and sustainable societies" (pg. 81). Indeed, after a period of neoliberalism in Latin America, constitutional amendments were adopted in Bolivia and Ecuador to pursue SK, however, the "social-statist" community transformed it into the BV project (Berros, 2021; Cuestas-Caza, 2018). In both Bolivia and Ecuador, Mother Earth (la Pachamama) is treated as a legal entity, worthy of rights. Bolivia's Mother Earth Rights Act lists the rights of Mother Earth: "to life, diversity of life, water, clean air, balance, restoration, and freedom from pollution" (Berros, 2021, pg. 196). Despite this legal recognition of the rights of nature, policies rarely follow, which illustrates the failure of BV as a state-led project. Forero (2021)'s work follows the failure of neo-extractivist governments to overcome extractive activities. A prime example is the Yasuní-ITT Initiative which aimed to prevent oil exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon, but the project was abandoned due to a lack of financial support (Berros, 2021). Relatedly, Uzendoski (2018) claims that BV is now an ideology, despite its Indigenous origins and decolonial roots. Another example of the failure of state-led BV is Bravo Diaz's (2021) ethnographic depiction of Waorani communities regarding the Ecuadorian government's bureaucratization of SK. Bravo Diaz (2021) emphasizes that the Ecuadorian government's living well is defined by revenues from oil dwelling while the Waorani people are committed to SK in their daily lives by cultivating peace, caring for each other, and creating happiness through ecological experiences (Bravo Diaz, 2021, pg. 52) As such, the "stage is set for a discussion of the conflicts and contradictions that exist between a particular Indigenous way of life and conception of living well that successive governments of Ecuador since Correa have claimed to defend and protect" (Artaraz et al. 2021, pg. 8). Both Ecuador and Bolivia have failed to radically restructure their economies to align with the principles of BV and the Rights of Nature, rendering BV as a state-led project unpractical and even harmful (Bravo Diaz, 2021).

However, the Peruvian context is different. Tensions still exist surrounding how the state envisions development and how some communities envision living well which is epitomized through the engagement of "planes de vida" or life plans, constructed by the Peruvian Ministry of Culture. However, BV/SK has not been co-opted in the same way as in Ecuador and Bolivia. Hall (2022) notes that Peru has not yet integrated BV into its constitution and argues that due to the lack of state-led discourse, there is more space for other actors to activate the concept for their own objectives. Relatedly, Merino (2016) identifies BV in Peru as a political platform in which Indigenous peoples can express their need for self-determination and simultaneously address territoriality. One example of the struggle for self-determination among Indigenous peoples in Peru is the case of the Wampis. According to a member of the Wampis, "This is a slow process...we don't want to begin from the top, as in Bolivia and Ecuador; we want to start from the bottom" (Merino, 2020, pg. 521). Consequently, the case of the Wampis suggests that starting from the grassroots may be more successful, in the exercise of autonomy and defending different models of living. However, I recognize that the complex contestation of BV is not reducible to top-down vs bottom-up perspectives or the state vs. the grassroots. My argument will develop on these complexities and braid them together, acknowledging the unlikely alliances between grassroots communities and NGOs, in the promotion of SK to defend alternative models of living in the Peruvian Andes.

Indeed, there are enough materials published to show that as an Indigenous principle of development and politics, SK is causing academics and public intellectuals to think differently. As a result, it is possible to point to unlikely alliances developing between Indigenous communities and mestizos[3] around aspirations to articulate BV from below. More practically, Chassagne & Everingham (2019) call for ways to operationalize BV as a

[3] Mestizo refers to a person of mixed ancestry.

community tool for transformation. Jimenez et al. (2022) further conceptualize the practicality of BV through the lived experiences of Indigenous peoples by highlighting three central notions: a communitarian economy, food sovereignty, and the rights of nature. These concepts "complement one another and offer opportunities to rethink innovation" (Jimenez et al, 2022, pg. 7). Additionally, Svampa (2019) argues that collective frameworks like BV "tend to develop an important mobilizing capacity; they install new themes, and slogans, in terms of societal debates… toward the construction of a common subjectivity" (pg. 40).

Defending Alternatives Through Biocultural Heritage

SK includes a bundle of knowledges about how to relate to the living world. These practices are jeopardized by the increasing threats of climate change and shifting cultural values. According to Swiderska (2020), "Across the world, Indigenous cultures and practices are being eroded by modernisation, commercial development pressures, lack of secure rights to land and resources, migration and lack of cultural education" (para. 7). Shepherd (2005) and Apffel-Marglin (1998) note the loss of cultural knowledge and biodiversity that development has exacerbated. Shepherd (2005) also notes that "biodiversity in the Andes is intimately connected to the agricultural practices and knowledge of the Indigenous farmers of the Andes" (pg. 37). However, the knowledges and practices related to SK are defended through respectful alliances between NGOs and Indigenous communities through the framework of Biocultural Heritage (BCH), termed by ANDES and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). BCH is defined as "knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous peoples and local communities, that are collectively held and inextricably linked to traditional resources and territories, local economies, the diversity of genes, species and ecosystems, cultural and spiritual values, and customary laws, shaped within the socio-ecological context of communities" ("An Evolving Concept"). It emerges from Indigenous cosmovision, in the hopes of furthering land rights and self-determination of

Indigenous peoples (Swiderska et al., 2022). BCH seeks to revitalize and valorize Indigenous knowledge and practices related to SK. According to Poole (2018), "threats to BCH can be understood as those indirect drivers that erode the knowledge and capacity for human communities to live within ecological limits and can be found throughout contemporary economic and development practices" (pg. 57-58, as cited in Pilgrim et al. 2009). Therefore, utilizing the framework of BCH, organizations like ANDES seek to protect Indigenous knowledge by confronting threats like agri-business and the loss of territorial rights (Swiderska et al., 2022). McGregor (2018) also notes that the reclamation and revitalization of Indigenous knowledge systems are essential in supporting visions of living well.

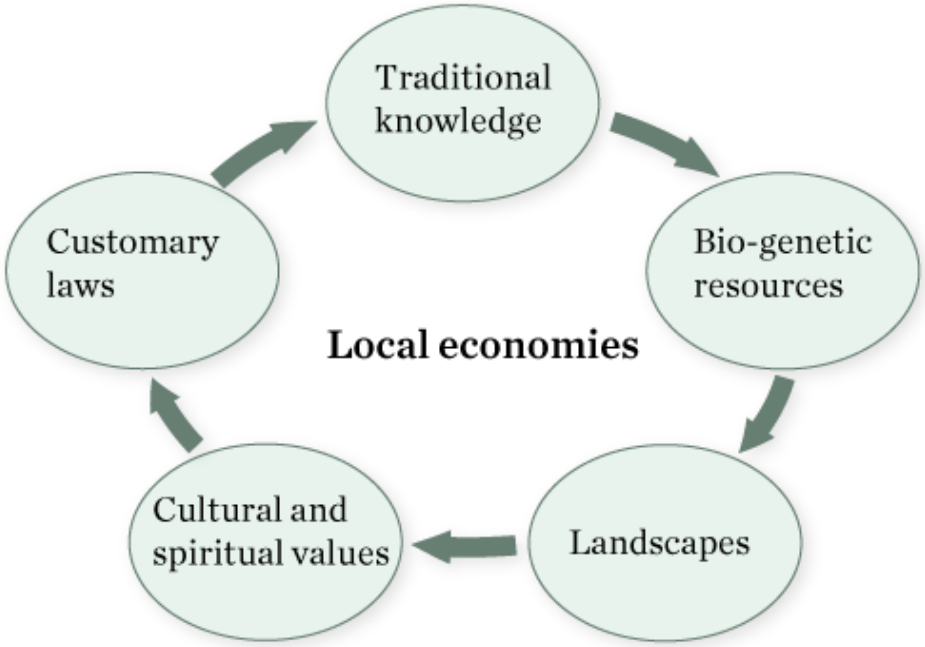

Figure 3: Biocultural Heritage. This chart illustrates the holistic worldview that exists in IBCHTs, in which "everything is inter-dependent and interconnected" ("An Evolving Concept").

One of my field sites, The Potato Park (PP) was established as an Indigenous Biocultural Heritage Territories (IBCHT) in 1998. Hall (2022) notes that the PP "adheres to the three criteria identified by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

that define an area or territory conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities" (pg. 95). These criteria require that the population must "live in close connection with the associated territory… play a major role in decision-making… and must ensure that the nature of the area, as well as the cultural values linked to it, is conserved" (Hall, 2022, pg. 95). This refers to the focus of ANDES on BCH and biocultural rights in pursuit of SK. According to IIED, "IBCHTs hope to protect the BCH of Indigenous peoples by strengthening collective territorial rights, thus sustaining local economies, like barter, biological resources, and ecosystem services" (*Indigenous Biocultural Territories*). IBCTs create space for the holistic worldviews of Indigenous Peoples by not replacing or marginalizing their philosophies and cosmovisions but rather placing them at the center of their work (Swiderska et al., 2022).

Related to BCH work, Svampa (2019) discusses an "eco-territorial turn", considering collective resistances and the current socio-environmental struggles centered around the defense of land and territory (pg. 40). According to Escobar (2020), territory "describes the principles and practices of culture… as a collective space of existence, it makes the harmonious coexistence of peoples possible. It grounds the Indigenous cosmovision as the reason for survival" (pg. 42). Furthermore, the protection and revitalization of Indigenous BCH is a product of deeply respectful collaboration between NGOs and local communities, paramount to instilling larger platforms and crafting alternatives to development. Escobar (2021) notes the convergences of different subaltern groups such as campesinos (farmers) and Indigenous peoples in mobilizing for autonomy and territory in the pursuit of defending different models of living.

A Work in Progress

Despite challenges, Vanhulst & Beling (2014) maintain that BV "is still a work-in-progress in search of legitimacy, but it can henceforth be safely regarded as part of a critical current towards the ideologies of progress, rationalization, and universalism" (pg. 3). Merino

(2016) suggests that BV is still connected to Indigenous aspirations and offers it as a platform for open discussion about Indigenous principles. Relatedly, de la Cadena (2015) describes another reading of BV, beyond an alternative to development, and embedded in relations of respect. Moving forward, Beling et al. (2021) and Villalba (2013) recommend a focus on the conditions in which BV can create convergences by linking it with "notions of 'overcoming extractive industries' and 'food sovereignty', (which) will build a 'chain of meanings' for a transformative potential" at the level of discourse and practice (pg. 1439). I will touch upon these practical convergences in Chapters 5 and 6. Thus, while the engagement of SK through discourse and practice, is contested and poses challenges, it also creates opportunities to articulate the convergences of Indigenous economic systems and agricultural practices related to SK, thus offering the possibility of defending development alternatives and instilling respect among diverse worlds.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Ethical Considerations

"If research is about learning and discovery, so as to enhance the well-being of the earth's inhabitants, then story is research" (Kovach, 2021, pg. 161).

This chapter outlines my case study by providing an overview of my fieldwork and methodology for data collection and analysis before deepening into ethical reflections. As SK continues to be an abstract idea, Cuestas Caza (2018) argues that research surrounding it must be "nourished by the empirical study of the practices and knowledge of native peoples... based on real coexistence and mutual learning, leaving aside characteristics of classical ethnography to introduce elements of decolonial and critical ethnography" (Cuestas Caza, 2018, pg. 59). I utilized multiple qualitative methods that allowed me to empirically study the perspectives of Quechua communities and NGOs, critically and holistically, building a framework of SK and its many uses and meanings as a discourse and set of practices. My study consists of critical ethnographic observation, informal and semi-structured interviews, group interviews/ workshops, and a collaborative photo-video project. This chapter explains the methodological approach, highlighting the multiple methodologies used and for what purposes, moving to a discussion of the data analysis conducted. Lastly, this chapter finishes with a reflection on the complex ethical implications of conducting this research and offers consideration for the importance of relationship and story in Indigenous research.

Approach: Research as Relationship

The focus of qualitative research is on participants' perceptions and experiences and the way they make sense of their lives (Fraenkel et al., 1999; Merriam, 1988). The attempt is therefore to understand multiple realities, such as the realities that exist within NGOs and Quechua communities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). My research questions relate closely to understanding participants' perceptions and practices of SK and NGOs' utilization of this discourse. Throughout my time in Perú, I aimed to adopt a transformative theoretical

framework (Mertens, 2010) by cultivating an ethic of care and acknowledging the embodied and relational nature of qualitative research (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003, Janesick, 1994, Kovach, 2021).

Because my research was conducted with Indigenous peoples, I did my best to consider Indigenous methodologies in my method and data collection. While I did not utilize Indigenous methodologies perse, as I did not work with an Indigenous conceptual and epistemological framework, I did my best to consider aspects of Indigenous research, focusing on the process and honoring the intangible and the relational (Kovach, 2021). According to Kovach (2021), "if we think of research as discovering new knowledge, Indigenous research then is about discovering new understandings as these relate to Indigenous peoples" (pg. 41). In this way, my research is settled under Indigenous research, rather than constructed with Indigenous methodologies. Throughout the research process, I have attempted to abide by the four Rs: respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility while adding in reverence (Kirkness and Barnhardt, 1991; Kovach, 2021 pg. 98; Pidgeon, 2019). Guided by Kovach (2021), I attempted to "do the work" of honoring place and being in relationship with the communities in the PP and CP, because "at the end of the day, it's all about relationships" (pg. 39).

Case Study

In the Andean region of Peru, sits the Sacred Valley of the Incas. Tourists stroll around in search of oneness with the Pachamama but often neglect to engage with any Quechua people from which the cosmovision of Pachamama comes. Beyond Pisac, hanging cliffsides reveal eucalyptus-littered mountainsides and ancient archaeological Pre-Incan ruins. Suddenly, you have reached Parque de la Papa or "The Potato Park," an IBCT. The PP is divided into 6 communities with a population of around 6,000 people (*Andes Cusco*). The

PP is renowned worldwide as one of the most successful in-situ[4] initiatives for the conservation of biocultural diversity (Angé et al., 2018). All the inhabitants of the park are Quechua people who pursue traditional livelihoods based on agriculture. Many residents participate in seed saving, agro-ecotourism, gastronomy, local crafts, and creation of natural products, which have been built and supported by the work of local NGO, ANDES.

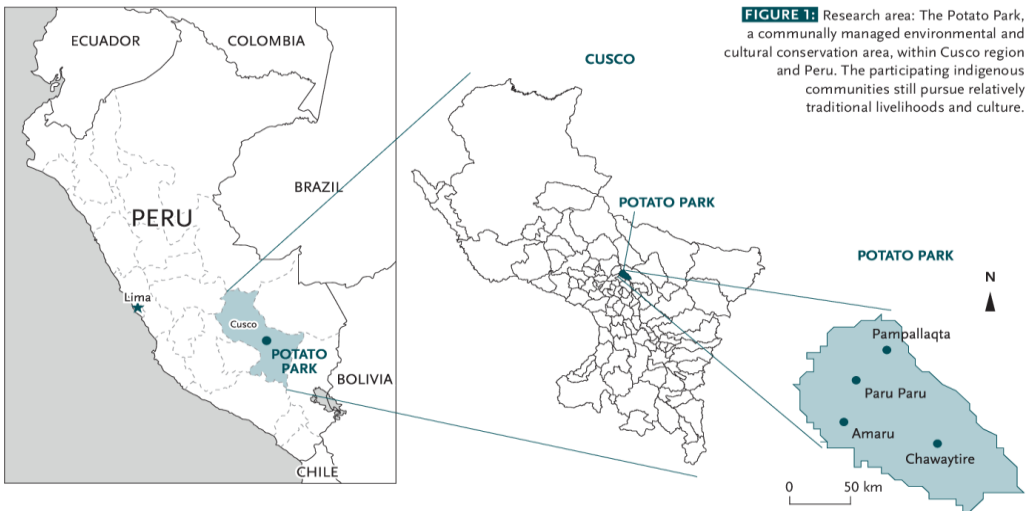

FIGURE 1: Research area: The Potato Park, a communally managed environmental and cultural conservation area, within Cusco region and Peru. The participating indigenous communities still pursue relatively traditional livelihoods and culture.

Figure 4: Map of the PP (Walshe & Argumedo, 2016)

Merino (2016) believes that BV has deep implications for policymaking in Peru as Indigenous peoples reclaim and reappropriate BV discourse, based on his work in the Peruvian Amazon. According to Coral-Guerrero et al. (2021) there is little research that adopts an empirical approach to SK with Indigenous peoples and Peru is construed to have a weak Indigenous movement (Merino, 2019). Thus, Indigenous communities in Peru continue to be marginalized, clearly illustrated in the current political climate of Peru, with protests all over the country (Merino & Gustafsson, 2021). However, many Indigenous groups in Peru have forged alliances with NGOs and civil society organizations that support Indigenous rights (Merino, 2019). Therefore, NGOs that support Peru's Indigenous communities, such as

[4] In-situ means in from the native environment.

ANDES, offer a fascinating case to study the promotion of harmonious living through practice and discourse.

I chose a case study approach which provided a theoretically rich case in which to evaluate this concept based on ANDES, and the associated Quechua communities it collaborates with, named IBCHTs: the PP and the CP. Flyvbjerg (2006) argues in favor of case studies, noting that they help to develop a "nuanced view of reality, including the view that human behavior cannot be meaningfully understood as simply the rule-governed facts found at the lowest levels of the learning process, and in much theory" (pg. 6). This case was particularly resonant based on the organization's focus on the Indigenist discourse of SK and their work on conservation, community development, and Indigenous rights grounded in the pursuit of harmonious living. The sites of Quechua communities near Cusco utilize SK to explain both their governance and structure, invoking Andean Cultural values like ayllu: "collectiveness through a social collective of kinfolk" and ayni: "reciprocity through mutuality and compensation (Hall, 2022 Walshe & Argumedo, 2016 pg. 167).

Svampa (2019) emphasizes the importance of understanding the articulations of peasants, Indigenous groups, NGOs, and intellectuals in centering and valorizing Indigenous knowledges. Therefore, I aimed to understand the adoption and functioning of SK by understanding the perspectives of different epistemic communities. Merino (2020) urges practical projects concerning BV to consider how to bring Indigenous perspectives into policy. Consequently, my data collection involved a mix of community level perspectives with the groups that ANDES works with, but also broader perspectives from NGOs in the Department of Cusco, the MOC, Peruvian academics and academics that study SK. By triangulating a mix of qualitative methods, this study is more comprehensive in the way it approaches the subject matter, and this has also allowed me to engage more reflexivity throughout the research process (King, Horrocks, & Brooks, 2018, pg. 164).

Data Collection

"Data are more than things; they are living connections animated through the exchange of story" (Kovach, 2021, 156)

More concretely, this thesis is the culmination of insights from ten weeks of fieldwork in the Peruvian Andes, in partnership with ANDES, a local NGO. My fieldwork was settled within two field sites: The Potato Park and Chalakuy Maiz Park. The rest of the interviews with NGOs in the Department of Cusco were conducted within the city of Cusco in person or on Zoom. My field sites were chosen specifically due to the work of ANDES with both regions, in the construction of IBCHTs. My fieldwork resulted in two week-long observations in both the PP and CP, five day-long observations in both parks, six interviews with NGO leaders in the Department of Cusco, and five interviews with academics. The visual component consisted of two collaborative workshops with the local agronomists or "Technicos Locales[5]," in the PP which produced sixteen descriptive videos and seven photos gathered by the Technicos. Interviews were conducted in Spanish when at all possible, and I transcribed all conversations/interviews from Spanish to English. However, a few conversations during observation were translated from Quechua to Spanish by a Technico. All the videos were translated from Quechua to Spanish by an interpreter from one of the PP communities.

Ethnographic Observations/Participation

Ethnography as a method attempts to obtain a holistic picture of the subject of study, portraying the everyday experiences of individuals by observing and interviewing them (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). During my extended time in both Parks, through staying in the houses of local families for weeks at a time, I observed through my five senses, with a journal

[5]I will refer to them as Technicos. They are locals who are hired and trained by staff from ANDES. I note there is only one female Technico.

and after prepared notes rich in narrative description (Angrosino, 2009 & Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Ethnographic approaches were crucial for understanding how social life works in Park communities and for understanding more deeply how individuals understand SK through bundles of knowledge and practices. I was able to create systematic outline through documentation of everyday behaviors, and an understanding of collective mentalities around SK (Daynes & Williams, 2018, pg. 23). After a prolonged time spent in the parks, I took advantage of opportunities that arose through opportunistic sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and established criteria for selecting who and what to study by gaining better insight into people who are representative of the group based on who I had access to (Hammersely & Atkinson, 2019). The impetus behind this method is to know what things are like for others and to examine the broad culture-sharing behavior of individuals and groups (Creswell, pg. 20187). Taking heed the advice of previous researchers studying SK, I deployed critical ethnographic methods, which are closer in line with Indigenous ways of knowing. According to Palmer & Caldas (2015) critical ethnography "draws on research and theory to critique hegemony, oppression, asymmetrical power relations... to potentially foster social change in direct or indirect ways" (pg. 2). Critical ethnography relates closely to Indigenous knowledge systems, which are relational, and have "the potential to transform a normative homogeneity and the nature of the academy itself" (Kovach, 2021, pg. 12). I will discuss this further in the ethical considerations section below.

Interviews

I engaged in semi-structured interviews with the families I stayed with in both Parks and conducted structured interviews with other NGOs in the Department of Cusco working on themes akin to Good Living. Lastly, I conducted group interviews with the Technicos Locales in the PP. Interviews serve to "develop a rich understanding, not simply of how individuals perceive an issue, but as a means of identifying the culture of an institution, its evolution, its shared history, its collective memory" (Blakeley, 2012, p.6). Thus, interviews

were crucial to understanding ANDES and other NGOs utilization of BV and SK. For example, an interview with Chirapa in the PP illuminated her perceptions of climate change and how this looming issue makes it harder for her to pass down the values and knowledges associated with SK, but how it is even more important.

For interviews in both Parks, I left my questions largely open-ended to allow the relevant themes and information to come from the participants themselves. According to Holstein & Gubrium (2003), semi-structured interviews help balance power relations because they encourage two-way communication through which participants are a part of the knowledge process. According to King, Horrocks, & Brooks (2018), interviews focus on the meanings, experiences, and perceptions of people and are social interactions based on conversation (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Thus, interviews allowed me to gauge how people define, experience, and perceive what it means to live well. Osborn and Smith (2008) describe semi-structured interviews as the "exemplary method" for phenomenological approaches because of their emphasis on exploring how people interpret their experiences (King, Horrocks, & Brooks, 2018, pg. 182).

Participatory Photo-Video Project

Smith (2010) claims that Indigenous methodologies seek to center subjugated knowledges and indeed "help create spaces for the voices of the silenced to be expressed and 'listened to,' and that challenge racism, colonialism and oppression..." (p.198). Indigenous methodologies are a call to non-Indigenous scholars to adjourn disbelief and in the pause, consider alternative methodological possibilities (Kovach, 2021, pg. 29). In pausing, I came to understand the importance of non-traditional methodological approaches. While I did engage more traditional qualitative approaches, I also enlisted a more creative approach in collaboration with ANDES. We ideated a participatory Photo-Video methodology that would involve the Technicos as the primary researchers. ANDES was clear that my research should

equip local researchers with skills and should embed them in the knowledge-creation process. As such, we hosted two workshops for the Technicos in the PP to learn about the Photo/ Video Project. After the second workshop, the Technicos expressed their excitement about the project and clarified final questions before data collection. ANDES staff believed such a visual methodology would be compatible with Quechua language which is often not a written language. The seven Technicos in the PP each chose one or two people from their community to take a photo or a video to describe SK with their ipads provided to them by ANDES. Over the course of six weeks, the Technicos took the project into their own hands and decided to take a video approach with participants, as they encouraged participants to speak about what good living means to them, often engaging in conversations with their neighbors about plants and SK. As such, there is rich data within these videos and photos, some of which I attempt to illustrate within Chapter 4. This contribution is important, as it affirms the relational perspective of Indigenous knowledges by "honoring the primacy of direct experience, interconnectedness, relationship, holism**,** quality, and value" (Cajete 2004; Kovach, 2021, pg. 35). And it does so through local engagement and knowledge sharing in a way that is creative, collaborative, and relational.

Data Analysis: "This is What I Believe to be True"

While in the field, I wrote reflectively, and summarized my ethnographic fieldnotes by writing daily in-process memos that led to code development. Memos are "not just descriptive summaries of data but attempts to synthesize them into higher-level analytical meanings" (Miles et al., 2014, pg. 95). From these memos, I identified codes and reduced them into emergent themes, creating meaning by relating these to an analytical framework, and writing them into a narrative format. For my interviews, I used a similar approach, using thematic analysis, creating subthemes, and articulating these themes into an overarching story (King, Horrocks, & Brooks, 2018). In analyzing the video content from the Technicos, I also

engaged in a thematic analysis, extracting meaningful themes from the videos, and grouping them into a few primary themes.

I was scrupulous in my iterative data analysis by constantly challenging my own interpretations of my data, comparing these with relevant literature, hypotheses, and existing data, and was able to clearly articulate patterns in the data (Marshall and Rossman, 2016). I also constantly checked back in with ANDES and the Technicos to ensure I understood local meanings. Additionally, engaging more of the perspectives from Indigenous methodologies, I sought to use my own body and mind when returning to the data and stories shared with me, noting that my data analysis is based primarily upon relationships. Acknowledging that research cannot be objective, I practiced reflexivity in my analysis process by being "ethically and politically self-aware, making myself part of my own inquiry" (Pelias, 2018 as cited in Creswell & Poth, 2016). I understand that my life story shapes my research interpretations and that my research findings are based on my relationality with individuals and organizations I partnered with. I acknowledge that I cannot rule out objectivity from my research, but I have done my best to make my claims open-ended, up for debate, acknowledging the complex realities of qualitative analysis, trying to write tentatively about my data and findings and constantly making statements with an ethos of "this is what I believe to be true" (Ahenakew, 2016; Kovach, 2021, pg. 225).

Ethical Reflections

"Ethical research should not only 'do no harm' but also have the potential 'to do good,' to involve 'empowerment'" (Madge, 1997, pg. 114). By focusing on the principles of "do no harm," obtaining culturally relevant informed consent, and ensuring the well-being of research participants, I did my best to practice ethical cross-cultural field research. I also engaged the "empowerment" of participants by involving them in the knowledge-creation process. Engaging a transformative theoretical framework, I was constantly reflexive about

questions such as: will the data collection and the outcomes of my study benefit the community I am studying? Will my research open avenues for participation in the social change process? By focusing on reflexivity and opening myself to critical perspectives from the individuals I was collaborating with, I have become more attuned to my own biases and hope to practice reciprocity and reverence in the research process. I also constantly grappled with questions offered by Kovach (2021) on the responsibility of working with Indigenous peoples:

1. Do I have a relationship with the Indigenous community with whom I seek to conduct research?
2. Am I trusted by that community?

Therefore, my time in Peru as well as the ensuing months writing the thesis has been shaped by these reflections, as I have attempted to build relationships based on mutual trust and continuous engagement and reciprocity. Through experiences with the communities in both Parks, namely the PP, in which I spent more time due to its proximity to Cusco, I learned a lot about what it means to be an ethical researcher through difficult conversations. I have never been asked so bluntly in a group interview "Why are you here? How are you going to benefit our lives?" These questions came from the only woman in the group of seven Technicos. I felt struck, with awe, sadness, and yet, filled with determination. Every other research experience I have had has been much easier, in terms of access to participants' time, being invited to their homes, cooked for, and offered tea. But my experience in the Andean region, a place that has been studied quite a lot, was wholly different. For that, I am grateful, because it has challenged me to reflect more critically on my positionality and purpose. Thus, my positionality as a white American woman studying at Oxford was a large consideration for my research, especially research with Indigenous peoples. Even though the people I spoke with didn't know about Oxford, I was still an "outsider" and a "researcher." Acknowledging

these limitations, and many more, I was vigilant in attempting to reduce power differentials between myself and participants by giving value to the reality of each person, by acknowledging that research is a relational process, in which participants are active agents with whom I am always in dialogue, even after fieldwork. I have learned that "research is relationship" (Kovach, 2021, pg. 242).

Dissemination: Research as Story

Even at the end of my time in the Andes, at the final workshop, the Technicos kept asking, "When will you return? No one else comes back," reflecting on the many researchers from prestigious institutions who came before me. To me, this reflects the wider culture of unethical research. Researchers must think deeply about how their research might do no harm to the participants they work with, and perhaps even do some good. According to Bagele Chilisa (2019), a post-colonial scholar from Botswana argues that external researchers should commit to being activists, by centering the voices of Indigenous peoples. Additionally, Kovach (2021) offers that "Indigenous methods ask researchers to demonstrate how research gives back to the individual and collective good. Research in service of social and ecological justice is inseparable from this value" (pg. 268). Thus, I seek to demonstrate how my research gives back to the individual and collective good.

Upon reflection, to give back to ANDES, the Technicos, and families who shared their wisdom with me, I am working to put together a video compilation of their stories of SK and share this with them. I am in conversation with Dan Hodgkinson about how to best disseminate visual data. I will also compile a more understandable version of my findings, in Spanish, so that participants can engage with the knowledge that we co-produced. I will also offer printed photographs to the individuals who participated in photo component. Dissemination with the communities will likely take the shape of an online workshop in which I share a presentation of my findings in Spanish with participants and the ANDES

team. In terms of further activism, I aim to continue to be an ally of Indigenous peoples, being more attuned to and engrossed in working alongside their struggles and lived realities, but also continuing to share their stories through writing from a place of deep reverence, respect, and solidarity. I will continue to reflect on the power of story in my research, how stories of harmonious living are passed down and shared, "for story is the most powerful intergenerational manifestation of hope" (Archibald et al., 2019, pg. 13; Kovach, 2021, pg.156).

Representing Indigenous Knowledge in this Academic Context

Ahenakew (2016) proposes that "using metaphor and poetry to disrupt sense-making and prompt sense-sensing in the experience of readers is helpful to revealing the contradictions and limitations of introducing Indigenous knowledge in western contexts" (pg. 337). Thus, in the context of Oxford, a prestigious, Western academic institution, I offer a space of pause at the start of each chapter in the form of a poem, so as to "appeal to the senses and displace the obsessions of the modern intellect" (Ahenakew, 2016, pg. 337). Some of the poems are written by Quechua authors, individuals from the PP, and others I have chosen on my own accord. The brilliant Audre Lorde (2019) in her work "Sister Outsider" notes that "poetry is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought. The farthest external horizons of our hopes and fears are cobbled by our poems, carved from the rock experiences of our daily lives" (pg. 371). I encourage you to sit with each poem before you delve into the preceding chapter. I have purposefully chosen to include the entirety of the poems I selected, to not fragment the knowledge, or cut it short just for my word count. Let this space bring you into the story so that your sense-making might be challenged to sense-sensing, revealing another way of understanding this story more holistically (Ahenakew, 2016). May it give you the space to cobble your own understanding of how we might live together, and live together well, with the living Earth.

awiyuyu mama" (Mother Ch'awiyuyu)[67]

Mayu patapi	*Along the river's edge*
q'illu sumbriru t'ikaqcha;	*a yellow flower hat;*
q'umir pullera ch'awicha.	*a wrinkled green skirt*
Inti taytaq k'anchaykusqan	*under the warmth of father Sun*
killa mamaq llanthuykusqan.	*under the shadow of mother Moon*
Munay munay wiñaqcha	*Beautifully, beautifully you grow*
phuyuq hump'inwan	*covered with a dewy cloud*
ch'aqchuykusqa,	*gently irrigated,*
hallp'aq sunqunmanta	*from the heart of the land*
phuturimuqcha....	*you sprout.*
hunt'aykachipuwanki.	*You fill us completely.*

Figure 5. Potatoes and Oka (Original photo, July 27th, 2022)

[6] Sourced from "Ch'awiyuyu mama," in Anka Ninawaman, Ch'aska Eugenia, Poesía en Quechua: Chaskaschay.

[7] According to Krögel (2012), "Ninawaman's poignant verses often celebrate (and indeed, promote) the underappreciated food resources that grow wild in the Andean countryside" (pg. 331-361).

Chapter 4: Threads of Harmonious Living

"How we think ripples out to how we behave. If we view these berries, or that coal or forest, as an object, as property, it can be exploited as a commodity in a market economy. We know the consequences of that."- Robin Wall Kimmerer

Introduction

In this chapter, I will illustrate the ways in which SK is understood and engaged as a set of practices and cultural knowledges in the Potato Park and Chalakuy Maiz Park. I will share perspectives on how SK is utilized by Technicos in the PP through their engagement with ANDES that encourage Technicos to explain and defend their worldviews through the ayllu system and Indigeneity. Based on ethnographic evidence from time spent in the PP and CP, I will define how SK is understood and practiced. I will also interweave ethnographic insights from other long-term ethnographers in the PP, like Olivia Angé and Catherin Allen. This chapter will draw in content from the photo/video project that illustrates the importance of biocultural indicators and Indigenous knowledge in local understandings of SK. Lastly, I will emphasize the challenges of climate change and shifting cultural values, that make passing down the values and practices of SK more difficult. Thus, I set up a foreground for the importance of alliances between NGOs and Indigenous communities in revitalization efforts, of which I will discuss further in Chapters 5 and 6.

Potato Park Practices and the Ayllu System

In July 2022, I spent one week in a homestay in the Potato Park in Paru Paru, the highest elevation community, at 3800 meters above sea level. Beyond Chirapa's[8] adobe home, I could view a shimmering lake in the distance. Chirapa is a weaver who owns many sheep and alpaca. For dinner, she made palomitas (popcorn) and a soup made from freeze

[8] All names are changed to protect anonymity. I have chosen traditional Quechua names as pseudonyms. Chirapa means rainbow in Quechua.

dried potatoes or "chunyo."[9] After dinner, I sat talking with Chirapa and her husband who had arrived home after a long day of driving. I asked about SK and Chirapa responded, "SK means having a good relationship with my husband. With my family."[10] I didn't pursue the question further but was surprised by Chirapa's response and her association of SK with relationships and harmony between immediate family, when my preconceptions imagined a different response, about relationships to the living world.

After my first night staying with Chirapa, I was led by the Technicos to one of the educational sites, where I was welcomed by individuals dressed in Quechua clothing, playing traditional instruments. As I walked through, a young woman sprinkled white flowers on the top of my head. Two Technicos took out a topographical map and began to explain the different ecological floors of the park and what kinds of foods can be grown at what altitudes. They excitedly shared knowledge about the ecosystem of the PP and pulled out a banner, which at the top read: "El Sistema Ayllu." The banner portrayed a Venn diagram with three circles, photographed below in Figure 6. At the left corner was the "salqa ayllu", the community of animals and plants, in the right corner was the "runa ayllu", where people live, and the bottom circle was the "auqui ayllu", the mountains or sacred "Apus." In the middle of these three circles was SK. The Technicos spoke of balance and harmony, noting SK as the harmony of these different worlds. The Technicos in the PP would continue to utilize the ayllu to illustrate and explain their worldview, focusing on the importance of balance of all different entities for living well and mutual flourishing.

[9] Chunyo is one of the main sources of food security in the Peruvian Andes. It is harvested, placed in a freezing river for a week, and then laid out in the sun to dry. It can be saved for years. It is traditionally used in soups.
[10] Interview, July 27th, 2022

Figure 6: The Ayllu System. This photo depicts one of the Technicos explaining the ayllu system, pointing at the center of the Venn diagram, at SK, the harmony between all worlds. (Original photo, July 27th, 2022).

Returning to the literature on BV/SK, Coral-Guerrero et al. (2021) identify four constituents of BV/SK through ethnographic work with Indigenous communities in the Ecuadorian Amazon, that closely support the empirical evidence I have gathered. The first is a *particular view of the relationship between humans and Mother Earth***.** I will describe this

based on how individuals in the Parks described their relationships to the living world. The second is *collective work and the reciprocity found in community*, which I will discuss in terms of the ayllu system and the chacra system, focusing in on concepts like ayni. The third is an *economy based on solidarity*, which I will discuss further in Chapter 5, in terms of the revitalization of Indigenous economic practices. The fourth is *respect for ancestral knowledge*, which I examine in terms of traditional ecological knowledge recognized through biocultural indicators. Each of these constituents of BV/SK is engaged through the practices of communities in the PP and CP and through the adoption of SK by ANDES. Though Coral-Guerrero et al. (2021)'s study was conducted in a different context, it offers valuable insights into Indigenous conceptualizations of SK which are few and far between in the literature.

Argumedo et al. (2021) identify ayllu as a "traditional landscape organisation concept that seeks to balance the needs and aspirations of people (Runa), nature (Sallq'a) and the sacred (Auki)… It promotes community and solidarity centered forms of production, accumulation, and redistribution in harmony with nature, and supports the construction of a society where differences are respected within a framework of equality, justice and dignity" (pg. 14). According to Huanacuni-Mamani (2010) ayllu means community and is a system of life organization. The notion of ayllu emphasizes that the structure of life is not only made up of humans, but of plants, animals, insects, mountains, etc. and these beings are all essential to balance and harmony (Huanacuni-Mamani, 2010). de la Cadena (2015) and Allen (2019) develop further the notion of ayllu based on their extended ethnographic work in the Andean region. Ayllu is often considered in terms of collective property and kinship relations, however de la Cadena (2015) considers that ayllu contains more than this. She claims that ayllu is "better expressed in the image of a weaving. With this imagery, "the entities (runakuna, tirakuna, plants, and animals) that compose it are like the threads of the weaving; they are part of it as much as the weaving is part of them" (de la Cadena, 2015, pg. 101). I

take forward this metaphor of a weaving throughout this thesis. de la Cadena (2015) also notes that sense of place is different in the Andean context. In her work, "Earth Beings", an Andean shaman notes "this place is who we are," the place emerges through them, and the place is also sentient (pg. 102). According to Allen (2019) and Gudynas (2011) well-being in the Andean highlands entails collective work and can only be experienced within community which involves the engagement of humans and non-humans (de la Cadena, 2015). Ayllu also has practical relevance for Quechua communities in terms of social organization and planning what to produce in their plots (chacras). Huambachano (2018) understands ayllu as a form of communal governance in which Quechua communities can express autonomy in terms of their food systems.

While ayllu is understood and practiced from the local perspective in the PP and CP, its engagement is likely influenced by ANDES. Indeed, ANDES identifies that the goal of the ayllu is "to achieve a balance, or SK, which represents an alternative model of wellbeing and development" (Argumedo et al., 2021, pg. 14). Interestingly, Fabricant (2013) theorizes further on Lucero (2011)'s argument that ayllu as an alternative to capitalism is a "encounter" between Indigenous peoples and international organizations. ANDES certainly influences how the Technicos speak about SK and ayllu, which is illustrated through the photo/video project in which Technicos frame their understandings of SK within the conceptual framework of the three ayllus. (Refer to Figure 7 below). The Technicos utilize the ayllu system to explain their worldview, their understanding of community, and who and what is part of the community, engaging runa ayllu, auki ayllu, and sallqa ayllu. Beyond a tool for explaining their worldviews, ayllu is also very much a reality constructed through daily practices for communities in the Andes and helps to defend their sovereignty. For example, Huambachano (2018) considers that concepts like "ayllu play a key role in the communal governance of Andean people to ensure that all community members have rights and

responsibilities to have access to sufficient and nutritious food" (pg. 1018). I will discuss further the entanglements between living practices of SK in the parks and how these are shared and framed by ANDES and by Technicos the following chapters.

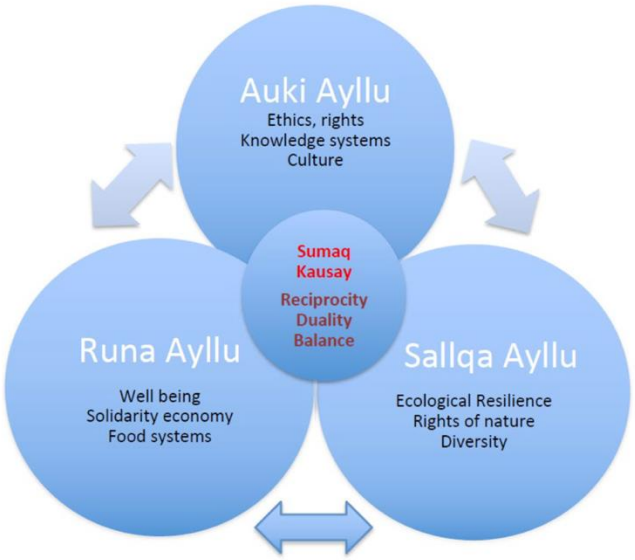

Figure 7: The Ayllu System in Biocultural Heritage Territories (*Andes Cusco*)

Figure 8: Woman from Choquecancha creating a traditional Lares weaving, symbolizing the ayllu system. (Original photo, August 8th, 2022).

The next day, Chirapa laid out an alpaca skin for me to sit on, as it was crisp in the winter morning air. Tumas, a Technico from Paru Paru sat next to us, he would act as our translator.[11] Chirapa began to talk, a wistful look emerging on her face, as she talked about how SK is a beautiful thing. She began, "it is interesting to talk about and it is marvelous. SK es para compartir, or to share. It means ayni, or reciprocity to each other, to all beings."[12] I ask Chirapa how SK is passed down from generation to generation. She distinguishes a set of rules for how to treat others and how to take care of the environment which includes knowledge of local plants, potato conservation, and cultivation, and the practices of ayni (reciprocity). Rather than an abstract concept, Chirapa described a set of rules embedded in daily practices (Cuestas Caza, 2018, de la Cadena, 2015). One of the ways in which knowledge of SK is put into practice is through rituals related to the potato, specifically in the PP. Angé et al. (2018) draw from rich ethnographic evidence that I am lacking based on my short time frame in both parks, by noting the everyday ethics associated with SK. Olivia Angé notes how Andean peasants perceive vegetables as individual subjects that are very much caught up in everyday life ethics, closely related to the set of rules Chirapa spoke of. Angé et al. (2018) note the specific example of the cultivation of care for potatoes, noting that "in the highland communities of the Cuzco region, potatoes are endowed with intentionality and emotionality and their relationship is not merely instrumental; peasants spend energy to care for their potato because they appreciate them as living organisms, not simply because they are food" (pg. 34). For example, Andean peoples believe that potatoes have a spirit. They believe that respect for the potato is enacted by a collection of practices that hope to

[11] In the PP, all interviews were facilitated by Technicos, who helped translate from Quechua to Spanish. I acknowledge any difference in translation that occurred due to error as a limitation of my study.
[12] Interview, July 27th, 2022.

restore respect between different species (Angé et al., 2018). These enactments of SK through interspecies respect cultivate recognition of ancestral wisdom.

Another way in which SK is enacted is through beyond-human entities, is through the relationship of communities in the Parks to the surrounding Apus or mountain spirits.[13] I went on an early morning hike with Technico, Tumas, who encouraged me to see the lagunas (lakes) of the region and watch them in the early morning light to become acquainted with the stars, the lakes, and the Apus, both in the dark and the light. After a few hours of hiking under the brilliant stars, we reached the summit as the sun rose on the horizon, revealing a view of the Sacred Apus: Pitusiray and Salkantay, each of which has its own spirit. In Andean cosmovision, Apus are Gods, as they give life. Tumas asked that I take a few minutes to introduce myself to the Apus that surrounded us. He said that we may ask for guidance for our lives, that we may lay ourselves before their spirits to gain wisdom. It reminded me of another conversation with a Technico from the PP, who explained how he sees his relationship with the mountains and to other people. He was trying to get across a deeply held belief as he kept saying, "the mountains are just like us... we are all one being."[14] He was getting at a deeply held spiritual and cultural belief in the Andes about the knowledge provided by the Apus, plants, and animals to local farmers, framed as biocultural indicators by ANDES, that "help to attain a good harvest and a good life, a SK" (Argumedo et al., 2021, pg. 17). Additionally, this perspective highlights Coral Guerrrero (2021)'s theorization of SK that recognizes a particular view of the relationship between humans and the living world.

We glanced at the mountains all around us and the lakes below, all shining in the morning light. And Tumas offered some words:

[13] de la Cadena (2015) often refers to Apus as earth-beings, which she identifies as among the tirakuna (mountain world), which are "other-than human beings who participate in the lives of those who call themselves runakuna (people)" (pg. xxiv).
[14] Conversation, August 26th 2022

"SK is the dance, the language, the food, it is all. Vivir en Harmonia. (Live in Harmony). Our traditions our customs, our animals, our wild animals, the plants. We must be cautious and live with the mountains. This is SK for us.

Now we are here observing mountains, lakes, and walking. You have come from a different place to observe ayni (reciprocity). This is SK.

Living together and sharing our experiences, now this is harmony. Like siblings.

We are observing the sun. Many thanks. Protect me, mountains, in my walk, in my life.

Pachamama with the Apus… this is SK. We can dialogue about SK. This is reciprocity.

We are free to live. We are tranquil. Live in harmony. This is SK.[15]"

Tumas's meditation on SK situated itself within the ayllu system, acknowledging the plants, animals, and mountains, the harmony and equilibrium of all which are essential to living well. His description is related to Andean customs and cosmology, and the particularity of territory- what grows there, what lives there- reminding him to be cautious, and care for the living Earth. It also touched on the importance of acting out of respect and reciprocity, and referred to family relations, and the larger community of life. These deeply held beliefs around SK do not just exist as abstract concepts, but rather are grounded in practices like barter, reciprocity, potato rituals that continue to make local worlds (de la Cadena, 2015, pg. 99). Angé et al. (2018) note the conservation practices in the PP that are concerned with the diversity of life on Earth, contributing to "flourishing ecologies" (pg. 38). As Tumas mentioned, SK is closely intertwined with keeping their customs and traditions alive. SK ensures the protection of biodiversity and ensures flourishing for the wider community of life. These practices and considerations relate to processes of worlding, which is entangled with the ayllu and is constantly being composed (Blaser, 2014). These ontologies or ways of being

[15] Conversation, July 26th, 2022

in the PP are inextricably intertwined with enacting reality and local worlds. I will return to the consideration of ontology in Chapter 6.

Respect in the Chalakuy (Barter) Maiz Park

We sit on the grass, suspended between the Earth below us and the clouds swirling around us, moisture gracing our faces. Qawari[16] sings from her belly, a song of the Chacra, or the physical space where Quechua communities traditionally grow their food. I listen with curiosity as I look down at the Lares Valley below me, seeing the high Andean ecosystem transform into a tropical environment where bananas and oranges grow. These mountains we sit on grow potatoes, carrots, maize, and cereals and are acknowledged by residents as Apus, or mountain gods. Qawari sings the Chacra song with a spriteful cadence and a deep knowledge of its meaning. The Chacra is a space that provides both food security and sovereignty for Andean families and a sacred space that protects ancient cultural and spiritual beliefs about relations to land, to food, to Earth, and to ancestors. The eucalyptus trees shimmy, their leaves spin and dance along to Qawari's song, as her voice travels into the afternoon breeze, down into the valley.

[16] Qawari means song in Quechua.

Figure 9: A Walk in the Chacra. (Original photo, August 10th, 2022)

A few hours' drive from the PP, on winding roads through mountain passes sits the Lares Valley and the Chalakuy Maiz Park. Beyond the town of Lares, Choquecancha is a community nestled into the hills. Choquecancha is termed the "comunidad campesina indigena de choquecancha" or the Indigenous farming community of Choquecancha. The mayor candidate for the Lares Valley, who grew up in the neighboring village, Ccachin, connected me with a family in Choquecancha who was willing to host me for a week, to learn about their everyday lives and how they engage with and understand SK. I stayed with a woman named Lupe, and her son, Irnistu, in their family home and a woman named Qawari in Ccachin.[17]

[17] The two families I stayed with in Lares are not associated or hired by ANDES, though, Qawari has participated in and benefited from ANDES's work in the region.

Like the PP, ayllu system is very much alive and well in the Lares Valley. According to action-research completed in the Lares region, "the holistic Andean cosmovision reflected in the SK and ayllu concepts is still dominant in the Peruvian Andes… People still practice ayni in the farming system, for example through labour exchange, produce barter and seed exchange" (Argumedo et al., 2021, pg. 16). In Choquecancha, I walked with Irnistu, through the winding hills, a small path between dry grasses. Above us and below us on the hill were chacras or the farm plots where Andean families grow their food. "Chacras are spaces for cultivation that provide food, seeds, ornaments, and medicinal plants, constituting traditional production systems that combine attributes of conservation and integrated use of resources" (Coral Guerrero et al., 2021, pg. 13). Irnistu pointed out that the maize (corn) had been harvested recently and so the stalks rested in many of the plots, keeling over in the dry season. Irnistu explained the different plants grown at this altitude: corn, potato, calabaza (squash), and alfalfa to feed the cuy (guinea pigs). Irnistu explained that every single family in Choquecancha owns a piece of land where they grow food, that is passed down. "The only thing that needs to be bought is salt and sugar"[18]. While the chacra is the functional place where Andean peoples grow their food, it is also a sacred space, Irnistu explained, as he showed me the shed where his father, a shaman, keeps special items, photos of Christ[19], bags of coca leaves, and crystals. Additionally, the family chacras play a crucial role in ensuring food sovereignty, which I will explain further in Chapter 5 (Coral Guererro et al., 2021).

As Irnistu pointed out many different plants and their uses, I asked about how he relates to land. Irnistu responded by saying "everything we do is out of respeto (respect)." He pointed out the mountain that towers over the town of Choquecancha, saying that is the "Apu that stands above their community, and gives them life." de la Cadena (2015) notes based on

[18] Interview, August 9th, 2022.
[19] The religion of people in the parks is something I did not have the time to engage with, though future research should consider the role of Christianity and Catholicism related to SK.

her work in the Andean region, that respect and care are a fundamental part of Andean life (pg. 103). Irnistu and I walked along a trail that was once said to lead to the city of gold. The clouds were drifting in as we walked, covering the lower Lares valley. Irnistu began, "Sumak means beautiful life. Or relations between family and village. Living in harmony, with no problems. Beautiful life. And ayni (reciprocity) is in SK. If there is no ayni (reciprocity) then there is no SK. You can't have one without the other."[20] Irnistu began to explain more about reciprocity: "Ayni is related to land and to the chakra. Ayni exists strongly in the chakra. Cooking for each other or helping each other harvest." de la Cadena (2015) described reciprocity as a "relation from where entities emerge, it moves them, and they grow from it" (pg. 103). This also supports Coral Guerrero (2021)'s reflection on collective work and reciprocity as a major constituent of SK. Irnistu's reflections on SK as deeply related to ayni, the chacra system, and family relations relates closely to what Qawari, from Ccachin, just across the valley shared. I was sitting in Qawari's kitchen, as she was preparing soup for dinner. The fire stove was burning hot as she fanned the fire of eucalyptus bark while sitting on a wooden stool. Qawari began: "SK means to live together like family. It means to share. Like if I don't have an onion, but you do, then we share. BV is the same. Here we are accustomed to saying "tio, tia" (uncle, aunt), Buenos dias (good morning), it's like family."[21] She reflected on how important family and community relations are, how everyone is treated with respect. Qawari explained ayni as how to help, as an Andean practice. For example, "beautiful brother, will you help me tomorrow? Please help me in ayni, helping with the sheep or carrying the food or the weaving. Ayni is in all." Another example of ayni that Qawari spoke of was also related to land, specifically in the chacra, where she described cooking together and making chica, a fermented corn drink. "When we are in ayni, we make

[20] Interview, August 9th, 2022.
[21] Interview, August 10th 2022

chicha together." Qawari also described practices of respect like how she always leaves an offering of coca leaves in her chakra: "I never forget my coca leaves!" Coca leaves are often used to make offerings to Mother Earth or "Pachamama" in the Andean context.

Coral Guerrero et al. (2021) posit that "the chacra appears repeatedly as unifying SK's constituent elements. It is not only a link between community and nature but also a source of wealth, the transmission of knowledge, and the production of hybrid identities" (pg. 12). Like ayllu, the chacra system has a practical orientation and defends ancestral wisdom and self-determination. As both Irnistu and Qawari explained, the cultural values of reciprocity are deeply embedded in the ways of relating to community members and to the land, laid out in a set of practices about how to attain harmonious living.[22] I will discuss these specific practices that are essential to SK in Chapter 5, in which I illustrate the importance of alliances with NGOs to revitalize and valorize these practices.

Sumaq Kawsay Through the Technicos' Eyes

ANDES has been working with four communities in Lares to establish the Chalakuy Maiz Park, scaling the model of the PP in another Andean region. I found it fascinating how people understand and speak about SK in both parks because it illustrates differences. For example, through encounters with ANDES, the Technicos in the PP have been equipped with opportunities to share their lifeworlds with visitors. For example, the Technicos spoke about Andean cosmology in conceptual terms, talking about the ideas of ayllu, how to keep equilibrium and balance, and right relationship with nature. They also spoke of biocultural indicators like the cry of the fox and the flowering of plants that indicates "whether it will be a SK."[23] The way Technicos share SK is influenced by encounters with ANDES. For

[22] I note how in this context, SK was primarily understood in terms of family relations. This understanding has been extended to local community, land, and other species. However, the focus on the family is interesting to note, and relates to maintaining social harmony.
[23] Video project, September 2022

example, the Technicos share practices they learned from agronomists they found helpful for their own production and are often invited by ANDES to attend workshops in the parks and different parts of the world, focusing on climate change, BCH, food security, and potato agriculture (Angé et al., 2018). Further, the photo/video project, carried out by the Technicos illustrates their focus on biocultural indicators and the balance of the ayllu system in their conceptualizations of SK. The themes from the photo/video project are centered around a few themes: biological indicators, reciprocity, and changing cultural values which relate to the other ethnographic data I have depicted.

Biological indicators based on traditional knowledge systems in the parks are a recurring theme in the video content, in which the participants described a certain plant, or animal, that when it flowers or cries, gives note of the time to plant or harvest, signifying whether it will be a SK. Kimmerer (2013), a member of the Potawatomi Nation, notes that "traditional knowledge arises from careful systematic observation of nature, from the results of innumerable lived experiments. Traditional knowledge is rooted in intimacy with a local landscape where the land itself is the teacher... to the attentive observer, plants reveal their gifts" (pg. 101). One participant notes the indication of flower blooms for the possibility of attaining a good life: "Yes brother, since we are going to have good nutrition and good production we are going to have a good life. According to what I saw, it will be a good life. In the case of flowers, if they did not bloom well, we would not have a good life."[24] Similarly, a participant considers the necessity of taking good care of plants and animals to have a good life: "I am going to talk to you about SK, about biological indicators. Inside here there are 3 types of kantuta, chullu tullun, roqha and añapanqho. They indicate us with their flourish, and when it blooms little, it indicates that there will be little planting or little feeding. It is for this reason that we take care of them, if we cut it we would not have a good

[24] Video project, September 2022

life. That is why we take very good care of them, also so that birds or hummingbirds can coexist with the plants."[25] In this video, SK is equated with biological indicators and harmonious coexistence. The flowering of a certain plant is essential for living well. Indeed, lived experiences of paying attention to the indicators of the "salqa ayllu" (the community of animals and plants) sets forth applicable practices based on reciprocity. Many of the participants speak about coexistence and care. This relates closely to their views of the ayllu, in which the plant world must be balanced for them to live well. These perspectives acknowledge the well-being of the flowering plants and the coexistence between other species, generating a "multi-species" entanglement, encapsulating wider ecological relationships (Kopnina, 2017). Kimmerer (2013) notes that "in Indigenous ways of knowing, it is understood that each living being has a particular role to play. Every being is endowed with certain gifts, its own intelligence, its own spirit, its own story" (pg. 100). In this way, non-human entities have their own wisdom to share with the people of the PP and this is expressed through the flourishing of the plant below (see Figure 10), the Roqha cactus, that when it blooms, it is an indication that SK is possible for that agricultural year. By recognizing the biocultural indicators as essential knowledge, ANDES aims to center TEK, that does not need validation from Western science.

[25] Video project, September 2022

Figure 10: The Roqha cactus (Taken during photo/video project). According to Tumas, this plant is used for treating inflammation, washing hair, and is a crucial biological indicator[26].

Another participant described SK as having an abundance of food and being able to support their families with it, relating to food sovereignty. “If we work hard enough, we sell the rest and eat part of it, such as potatoes, smooth, moraya and others that we feed our children. We live well in a harmonious way.”[27]

[26] Interview, July 26th, 2022
[27] Video project, September 2022

Figure 11: Potato Harvesting (Taken during photo/video project).

Other video content described SK as reciprocity, or ayni: "Those mountains protect us, for example, it protects us from the winds, cold. And in return we provide him with drinks, cokes, etc. through the land. And this is a SK.[28]" This consideration recognizes the "runa ayllu" (where people live) overlapping with the "auqui ayllu" (the mountains or sacred apus). The themes emerging from the photo/video project engaged by the Technicos illuminates the entangled nature of the equilibrium of the ayllu system, reciprocity, food sovereignty, and potato rituals in the pursuit of SK. I chose to share some of the content from the project because it was collected by the Technicos themselves, a step towards decolonizing the research process. The project also emphasizes how the Technicos chose to emphasize more conceptual elements of SK like the ayllu system and biocultural indicators, which is interesting on its own accord and highlights their encounters with ANDES. Angé et al. (2018) theorize from the work of Cepek (2011), arguing that "in the PP, technicians are not afraid that 'science transforms their knowledge into a good that can be understood and used by outsiders'" (pg. 35). In this way, the Technicos become a bridge, to engage outsiders in their knowledge of SK that is shaped by wisdom passed down through generations and through

[28] Video project, September 2022

new knowledge about science, conservation, and Indigeneity acquired through engagement with ANDES.

Sumaq Kawsay Situated in Experience

My observations and conversations in the CP illustrated a different focus than the PP, centered around practices, like barter and agricultural relations. The individuals I spent time with the in Lares region did not conceptualize Andean cosmology but rather could relate the values of SK to practices like ayni in the chakra and planting and harvesting with their neighbors. Communities in the CP have stories, songs, and practices of how to respect the river and mountains, they are not "using" BV or SK because it is simply embedded in their everyday social lives through practice. Furthermore, while individuals in the Lares region can describe what it means to live well, it is not always conceptualized under the discourse of BV or SK. Eliza from the Peruvian MOC notes that people in communities "might have certain ways to talk about a good life, which may include the health of the rivers or other things. They describe this good living in other ways, and it often has to do with the relation to the land and the sense of being in equilibrium."[29] In the CP, SK is not conceptualized or packaged. As Eliza explains, "if we talk about what good living means, local communities explain it differently. They don't tell you."[30] In the Lares Valley, practices like ayni, chalayplaysa, etc. continue to make local worlds (de la Cadena, 2015). In this way, SK is not conceptualized as discourse, but rather practiced and situated in experience. This relates to Shepherd (2005)'s recognition of Andean people whose explanations "were not framed within discursive packages, and explanation was rather transmitted through comment and gesture, embedded in actions, and situated in local experience" (pg. 41). This distinguished difference is worth noting, but it also points to the importance of the holistic work of ANDES

[29] Online interview, August 23rd, 2022
[30] Online interview, August 23rd, 2022

in articulating the values that communities share, for this is what political work is all about. Further, while practices like barter continue to exist in the Lares Valley, such practices have not continued in the PP region, though ANDES is working to revitalize them. In Chapter 5, I will explore ANDES's utilization of SK and their focus on sustaining cultural practices while in Chapter 6, I will further interrogate the importance of alliances with NGOs to valorize and revitalize practices associated with SK.

"puchaicunaka manaña ñowpaj jinañachu" "The Days are Not as They Used to Be"

According to ANDES, "the current erosion of genetic and cultural diversity is unprecedented, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for communities around the world to cope with the adverse impacts of climate change, threats to food security, and water scarcity" (*Andes Cusco*). Merino notes that in many communities the values of the market economy impact the cultural and social fabric of communities.[31] Relatedly, traditional values and food systems are changing in many Indigenous communities especially among younger generations (Swiderska et al., 2022). Escobar (2007) acknowledges the project of modernity in the Latin American continent, which "enacted a totalizing project aimed at the purification of orders (separation between us and them, nature and culture)" (pg. 183).[32] Chirapa's sentiments echo the previous statements, as she noted that many communities are losing SK and the food systems and practices associated with it. "People aren't teaching the Andean cultural values or about SK anymore."[33] I can't speak to how exactly SK is lost, though I propose it is lost collectively, as it is enacted through collective practice and ritual, but passed

[31] Online interview, July 21st, 2022

[32] I do not engage deeply with the concepts of modernity and globalization in this thesis because I do not know the ways in which locals in the park communities understand or interpret these academic concepts. I rather consider them as currents related to linear development based on progress and accumulation.

[33] Interview, July 27th, 2022.

down through different generations of family. Indeed, “the multiplicity of meanings of SK is based on the transmission of knowledge between generations to manage the ecological, spiritual, and autonomous bases for meeting community needs” (Coral Guerrero et al., 2021 pg. 46; Viteri Gualinga, 2002). Chirapa reminded me SK is “Our way of living. we remember, our ancestors… it is our lifeway.” She emphasized the importance of speaking about and sharing the knowledge and practices associated with SK. To Chirapa, SK is a “lifeway” that is passed down from generation to generation through the ayllu and chacra systems. Chirapa explained that she will pass all that she knows on to her two daughters but noted that many factors make her job of passing down this knowledge more difficult.

Then Chirapa began, “what I realize now is that SK is changing in the context of contamination and climate change.” She began to talk how she experiences time differently now. She said that when she was a child her parents told her that time was not running. To Chirapa, time felt longer and slower. But now, “time passes rapidly, and the hours are short.” Chirapa describes a reorienting as her perception of time has shifted over the years. This relates to what Bear (2014) acknowledges as temporal multiplicity, which “allows people to navigate among competing social and political demands” (Goodale, 2022, pg. 791). Chirapa navigates between different social and temporal worlds and shifting community values. Rivera Cusicanqui (2012) notes that the “Indigenous world does not conceive of history as linear, but rather the past and the future exist within the present” (pg. 96). Kirtsoglou & Simpson (2021) also speak about “chronocracy”, noting the focus of the present on “accumulation, exploitation, and ecologic destruction” (pg. 24). This sense of shifting time relates to Angé et al. (2018)’s recognition in the PP community, of the repeated refrain in Quechua: “‘puchaicunaka manaña ñowpaj jinañachu’, meaning that the days are not as they used to be anymore. Others say ‘watac manaña ñowpaj jinañachu’, meaning that the whole year is not as it used to be any more” (pg. 207). The authors claim that this refrain is “more

than just a climatic statement because it entails all kinds of living beings, including tubers" (Angé et al., 2018, pg. 107), extending conceptualizations of well-being and progress to include the more-than-human world.

Then, Chirapa began describing how all the food in her community and other villages used to be organic and natural and now with access to processed foods, people are eating the processed food, which is killing the small-scale agriculturalists. She also spoke about how climate change is affecting the amount of food they produce, expressing preoccupation for the future of small-scale agriculturalists. Allen (2016) also notes that in many Andean communities, "ayni and minka (reciprocal labour exchange) have diminished in value as individuals have aspired to live from money instead" (pg. 85). Many of the younger generations in the parks do not value the same things as generations before, due to climatic changes and changing economic practices (Angé, 2020). As such, knowledge related to SK is not as easily passed down, which relates to content from the video project. The participant began, "I don't pass this information (about potatoes) on to the next generation either, because they are focused on getting money, they don't value planting food anymore."[34] Referring to younger generations, he noted, "they say 'we are going to eat large potatoes from the market' but I point out that food from the market is not always good … It makes me think that some things should be kept as they used to be, respect for the environment is being lost, perhaps that is why (potato) production is also less."[35] This participant connects the loss of respect for the environment with lesser potato yields, lamenting the shifting values of younger generations, who are focused on money rather than planting food. Angé (2020)'s work supports this statement, as she notes a loss of respect for the potato through gestures and norms of elders, noting that "growers do not only lament that they are cultivating less,

[34] Video project, September 2022
[35] Video project, September 2022

but also that cultivated plants are producing less tubers" (pg. 115). Diego, a local from Ccahin spoke about contamination of local areas with sadness. He reflected, "Globalization has trashed many of the rural areas... people can't live BV with contamination. Now people are adapting to a new style of living."[36] Diego also noted how the knowledge surrounding SK could be lost at any moment. These worries of losing SK in the face of contamination and climate change furthers the necessity of valorizing this knowledge, highlighting the importance of the work of ANDES in revitalizing practices associated with SK.

Closing

Escobar (2007) notes that the "present is a moment of transition: between a world defined in terms of modernity and its corollaries, development and modernization… and a new (global) reality which… can be seen either as a deepening of modernity the world over or, as a deeply negotiated reality that encompasses many heterogeneous cultural formations (pg. 182). However, such heterogenous cultural formations often need the support to continue living differently, to construct alternatives. The currents of SK as engaged in the park communities are practiced and passed down in diverse ways and supported through the work of ANDES. In Chapter 5, I will illustrate how ANDES's work defends practices of agricultural production, Indigenous economic systems, and innovations in both parks while fostering seed diversity and climate resilience, in harmony with local priorities.

[36] Interview, August 8th, 2022

Papa Qhaswa, Dancing the Potato[37]

Tusu tusurispan hinaraq, chakitaqllawan urkuta phatarichin, tukuta kicharin. Papa mujuchataq chaypin wasichanta tarikun.

Papa hallmay, llanpataq aphanaykushan, lloqeman pañaman, allpataq phawarishan. Papachakunataq kusirikushan, puñunachanta yapaykuqtinku.

Urkutaq simparikushan.

Papa munayta t´ ikarimuqtin, Apu mistiyuq utillana sayarimushan. T´ika pallayniyuq qomer, punchuchawan churakuspakuy, chayta qawa qawarispa sunku kusirikun. Llakitaq chinkaripun allin wata papa niqtiku.

Añay

Dancing with the chakitaqlla (a foot plow) even the mountain opens up.
The potato seed finds a new little house.

Hilling the potato plants, the llampa (another agricultural tool) hurries from right to left, the soil flies from one side to the other.
The potatoes rejoice with the new blanket they are provided to sleep.

The mountain is braiding itself with colours.

When potatoes start flowering, the mountain Apu Mistiyoc stands up proudly, with the colours of the potato flowers, with his green poncho.
Looking at this landscape my heart is full of joy; and all sadness is forgotten knowing that we will have a plentiful harvest.

Thank you

[37] Sourced from Angé's work on potatopoetry.org

Chapter 5: Braiding Strands of Discourse and Practice

"We need alliances and coalitions now" (Escobar, 2021).

Introduction

While Chapter 4 focused on the understanding of SK from the perspective of community members in the PP and CP, this chapter focuses on the perspectives of organizations that support these communities. In the context of these two regions, SK is understood as a set of knowledges and practices about how to relate to family and the wider community of life. I will now illustrate the understanding and use of BV/ SK at the NGO level, engaging perspectives from NGOs and the Peruvian MOC. It is important to understand multi-level perspectives because the concept of BV is "an open field of contestation inhabited by multiple actors—Indigenous communities, state institutions, and international policy and academic organizations" (Artaraz et al., 2021, pg. 15). Considering the power of discourse and story in creating reality, engaging perspectives beyond the community level is crucial. Based on fieldwork with the NGO, ANDES and interviews with NGOs in the Cusco region, I argue that BV and SK have been adopted and engaged by different organizations, to articulate different notions of well-being and human-nature relations, by using the different strands of BV discourse. NGOs in Cusco are utilizing BV as symbolic discourse to advance political demands and as an aspirational guide while other NGOs in partnership with the Peruvian MOC are utilizing BV discourse as a practical tool to plan out how people would like to live, though I question whether this is just a co-option of BV in the name of development.

Next, I focus on ANDES, which uses the Indigenist discourse of SK situated under the framework of BCH. Through their engagement with communities in the PP and CP, ANDES has encouraged locals in the sharing of cultural knowledge with academics and tourists. Considering the framing of BCH, I will identify how SK/BV is emerging as a

political platform to express ecological concerns, territoriality, and cultural rights of Indigenous peoples to share diverse ways of relating to the living world thus cultivating "ontological diplomacy" (Hall, 2022; Merino, 2016). I close by illustrating how ANDES revitalizes practices of SK and encourages grassroots innovations, which are theorized under BV/SK, to further imbue SK with practicality to construct development alternatives.

NGO Engagement of Buen Vivir

There are many different forms of BV, which relate to the strands of BV discourse: the Indigenist, social-statist, and post-development. Beling (2018) notes that "while BV became anchored in the socio-cognitive and cultural landscape and in certain socio-political practices in the Andean-Amazonian region, its content has been diversified, forking into a range of more or less (di)similar discourses respectively re-articulated by the successive groups that have adopted and adapted it" (pg. 16). Merino notes that BV is used by NGOs in diverse ways due to the inspiration of ancestral rules, the aim to advance political demands or to obtain funding for development projects.[38] According to Sergio, from Centro Bartolomé de las Casas (CBC), a community development organization in Cusco, actors use the discourse in different ways and imbue BV with "certain personalities, legal, spiritual, as a political platform."[39] While BV discourse is particular in its own right, illustrated by the many strands within academia, discourses around SK are also unique in their own way as they try to engage specifically with the Indigenist or pachamamista strand, by centering the Quechua cosmovision, rather than the Spanish translation of BV.[40]

According to Sergio, BV as a concept is "aspirational, but also an inspiration. It holds many values that respond to a series of problems that we have as a society." Sergio referred

[38] Online interview, July 21st, 2022.
[39] Online interview, August 4th, 2022
[40] ANDES utilizes SK, while other organizations tend to use the terminology of BV. Thus, I will cycle between BV and SK in this chapter depending on context.

to BV as a "mobilizing utopia" allowing for certain visions of how we want the world to be. CBC's mission statement reads "towards an agenda for the Good Living of the Andean and Amazonian macro region of Peru" (*Centro Bartolomé de las Casas*). According to their website, they focus on the promotion of territorial development based on BV, strengthening of governance, defense of different rights, fulfillment of the SDGs, and more (*Centro Bartolomé de las Casas*). They have created an agenda of BV priorities to guide their work. Through conversations with three leaders from CBC, they described their use of BV as "aspirational." Interestingly, Sergio from CBC also pointed out that as an organization they are "committed to the concept of BV… it is not a discourse for us." Though Sergio clarified that "we're building the narrative we need so that the proposal has capacity if it is said to be attractive also to the different actors, both from the community and from the authorities themselves."[41] Thus, conversations with CBC showed that groups re-articulate BV for their own narrative, to ensure it is attractive to particular actors, but also to the communities they serve. There is a clear need to paint a picture of an aspirational narrative for different audiences and actors, to render BV with the capacity to to encourage transformation.

NGOs shared how BV discourse is utilized at the national level by Indigenous and peasant movements. Dan, the Director of Instituto del Bien Común (IBC), an NGO based in Lima, insisted that "BV wasn't grown out of local communities" but rather claimed that BV comes through the Indigenous movements into the peasant movements and that BV discourse is used at the upper level of these movements. "Vivir bien is about resolving problems that keep people from living the life they want to live." [42] Eliza, who has been working at the MOC for over 5 years, similarly began by talking about how national Indigenous organizations in Peru are utilizing BV in their political demands and communications. She

[41] Online interview, August 4th, 2022
[42] Online interview, August 23rd, 2022

began, “in the Peruvian context, some national Indigenous organizations use good living in their political demands, in their communication, when they express a topic, for example, related to food security, climate change is always very discursively related to calling just that BV.”[43] Both the Director of IBC, Dan and Eliza acknowledged the use of BV discourse in national and regional Indigenous organizations. They also noted that communities do not utilize the discourse, which also relates to the insights from Chapter 4 which clarified that BV is not expressed at a local level by communities, but rather there are more distinct ways to conserve and steward the world.[44]

SK Mobilized through NGO Engagement with Communities

Eliza contrasted the situation of Ecuador with Peru, furthering that communities explain good living differently, on their own terms, not utilizing the discourse of BV like the successive groups who have adapted it. “If I talk about good living in Ecuador, for example, it is likely that this discourse has already affected regional and local federations and communities much more deeply. In the case of Peru, what I believe is that it is not necessarily expressed. Like BV or like SK in regional or local communities, right? So, I would say that in Peru the idea of good living is still at the discursive level in discussions in national organizations. If we talk about the term BV. But if we talk about what BV means, local communities explain it differently.” She gave an example of what a person from a community might say, “for me, to live well is to be in balance with nature.” This resonates closely with the empirical evidence I gathered in the CP. When I spoke with individuals in the CP and individuals not hired by ANDES in the PP, they could speak about a good life, but this was related to the chacra system, respect for family relationships, and relationship to land. They did not talk about BV or SK unless I specifically asked them about it, but rather

[43] Online interview, August 23rd, 2022
[44] Online interview, August 23rd, 2022

could describe living well through other means, like their relationship to the Apus or to their family. However, the Technicos did relate to SK more conceptually, through biocultural indicators, like the flowering of plants or the cry of the fox.[45] In the PP, the Technicos brought up SK on Day 1 and related it to the ayllu system and reciprocity, explaining that SK was at the center of their world. As noted in Chapter 4, ANDES plays a role in supporting communities in the PP to mobilize their cultural heritage for visitors to reimagine human-nature relationships. Furthermore, SK/BV is not mobilized at a local level unless facilitated by NGOS or pro-Indigenous groups. I will interrogate what this means in Chapter 6.

BV as Planes de Vida?

The tension between how communities understand SK/BV as a set of practices and knowledges and how organizations and states utilize it for their own purposes is interesting, particularly in the Peruvian context. BV *is* being used by a state institution in Peru in collaboration with Indigenous organizations and NGOs, thus BV is not completely without co-option. The MOC and IBC are utilizing BV discourse to create "planes de vida" or "life plans." Dan from IBC noted that BV is used as a guide to help communities live the lives they want to live, describing planes de vida as a "process from communities to make agreements among themselves on how to use land together to protect, conserve, and live well."[46] According to Eliza, planes de vida are "a more methodological understanding of BV, not one, as we say, of the State and non-governmental organizations. Civil society has wanted to approach BV in a methodological way and they have done so through a methodological tool called Life Plan. It is a tool for understanding how peoples conceive their own development. And that development itself is related BV."[47] However, Sergio from CBC, held another view of planes de vida, claiming that they were an example of the state appropriating

[45] Video project, September 2022
[46] Online interview, August 23rd, 2022
[47] Online interview, August 23rd, 2022

the concept of BV. “Let's say, it (the State) has plans for BV, but basically they are development plans, with a discourse of BV, of what we have already said again is incorporated into the logic of BV, of cement, of the accumulation of neo-extractivism, and so on.”[48] Sergio’s reflections relate to Uzendoski (2018)’s claims that narratives of Good Living have become an instrument of power and submission, claiming that BV is now an ideology, despite its Indigenous origins. This discussion offers a space to learn from the contradictions of state-led BV and creates an opening for the role of NGOs in facilitating an Indigenist discourse of SK, that acknowledges local priorities, grounded in Quechua cosmovision. Thus, the focus on SK, attached to Andean cultural references like ayllu and chacras, embedded within local realities and practices, holds greater hope for defending the interests of Quechua communities and their own valuations of living well.

ANDES’ Mobilization of Sumaq Kawsay

While state-led development struggles to encompass the origins and fullness of BV, the work of organizations in partnership with Indigenous communities has strengthened the capacity of SK to articulate alternative notions of well-being to a broader audience. In this section, I will focus on how ANDES utilizes the discourse of SK to defend the biocultural rights of Quechua peoples in both parks. By valorizing the practices of SK, educating outsiders about Andean values through cultural learning and exchange, and creating cultural products, ANDES defends the vision of SK. ANDES’ mission statement reads: “to promote a conservation and sustainable development approach based on the Andean principle of Sumaq Kawsay through the implementation of Biocultural Territories” (*Andes Cusco*). When I originally found ANDES online, I felt surprised that they used the terminology of SK in their mission, as all the other organizations I had been researching mobilize the discourse of BV. This difference is a strategic choice, embedded within Andean cosmovision and Andean

[48] Online interview, August 4th, 2022

references, as an attempt to bridge the epistemological and ontological difference that SK holds. ANDES' strategic use of SK speaks to their intention to recognize the complexity of its meaning, thus creating a platform to share alternative notions of well-being and Indigenous economic models in the international context. According to Hall (2022), the PP frames their vision of the environment as "good living" under the umbrella term, SK. In many cases, SK discourse is used to mobilize against extraction or to give legal rights to nature (Berros, 2021). But what is interesting in the case of ANDES is that SK isn't being used as a political and symbolic discourse against extraction, but rather as a discourse to promote and valorize Andean values and practices and articulate holistic notions of well-being. This engagement of SK is novel and worth understanding further.

ANDES attempts to bridge Indigenous cultural heritage with a renewal of human-nature relations, by articulating different ontologies through the realm of culture. ANDES state that they "promote interdisciplinary collaborations between culture, biodiversity, rural development and agriculture actors, and to promote interdisciplinary concepts and tools (such as SK and ayllu) that can help integrate culture in decision making for development and conservation" (Argumedo et al., 2021, pg. 9). SK, then, framed under Indigenous cultural heritage, is a helpful tool for integrating local culture, spirituality, and politics into national programs and policies. In sharing SK, ANDES attempts to express different ways of knowing and being that exist in the park communities. "The uniqueness of ANDES vision rests upon its identification of hybrid communities (ayllu) and its stated need for reciprocal relationships (ayni) and thus, upon an ontological model that is an alternative to modern naturalism" (Hall, 2022, pg. 100). ANDES recognizes the existence of alternative relationships to the living Earth through SK leaving "a door cracked open" to articulating alternate notions of wellbeing and a reshuffling of priorities around development (Allen, 2019, pg. 12; Hall, 2022). Thus, ANDES is "mobilizing internationally a "non-naturalist" conceptualization of the

environment" emphasizing spirituality through rituals, stories, and concrete practices (Hall, 2022, pg. 105).

As I discussed in Chapter 4, many practices related to SK have been lost over time, but ANDES helps to revitalize and encourage these practices. Much of this revitalization work is done through the help of the Technicos. ANDES has equipped the Technicos with the communication tools to be able to share their cultural heritage with people who visit the parks. The Technicos are very proud of their knowledge and are eager to learn more. In the PP, "technicians are encouraged by ANDES "to rescue potato rituals that are losing appeal" (Angé, 2020 pg. 8). For example, ANDES "transformed what was an 'agrobiodiversity festival' into a sacred ceremony related to potato harvesting, biodiversity conservation, and thanksgiving to the Pachamama" to "recover a custom that young generations tended to omit" and to "circulate this practice on regional and national stages, as a plea for respectful agricultural practices" (Angé, 2020, pg. 8). ANDES clearly recognizes that the meaning of SK for the communities in the parks is deeply territorial but also spiritual. May (2022) also acknowledges the importance of spiritual connections to territory as an organizing principle through his work with the Maya Tz'utujil community of San Pedro la Laguna concerning a megacolecter project in Lake Atitlán, Guatemala. May (2022) notes that the community has mobilized their relationality with Lake Atitlán to defend their sovereignty. Furthermore, Copeland (2018) states, "discourses that ignore spiritual connections to territory … lose sight of a valuable organizing principle" (pg. 6). Moreover, ANDES has recognized this and has valorized the park communities' relationality with their territory to help defend their sovereignty while sharing the spiritual traditions and practices of Andean culture. For example, ANDES often uses the image of the Santa Cruz Pachacuti, a pre-Hispanic model that represents Incan cosmology, to illustrate Andean worldviews. According to Swiderska & Stenner (2019), the Pachakuti graphic uses symbols to illustrate Andean worldview. It

represents" the 3 'pachas' – the sky, stars, moon, sun and the mountain gods ('Apus'); the mid layer (men, women, land, sacred lakes); and the sub-soil (tree roots, farmland). This way, the knowledge of the Inca ancestors is shared, and key elements are reinforced such as the role of the Apus in governance" (pg. 9). There was a large poster of this image in the ANDES office in Lares. However, this focus on spirituality is complex, considering that most of the population of the PP is Catholic, while some are Protestant, and according to Hall (2022), this brings up tensions during ritual ceremonies like Papa Huatay, which I will discuss in Chapter 6. I did not enquire into the religious perspectives of people in the parks and how this relates to their understanding of SK, but I acknowledge this would be worthy of further consideration. ANDES mobilizes the cultural and spiritual traditions of Andean peoples, under the framework of SK and BCH to recover customs in the park communities as well as create a platform on a larger scale to valorize Indigenous agricultural traditions and ways of knowing. I will now discuss interrelated practices that ANDES centers in their work within both parks: Indigenous economic systems, food sovereignty, and potato rituals, all centered under the Indigenist discourse of SK within the broader framework of BCH.

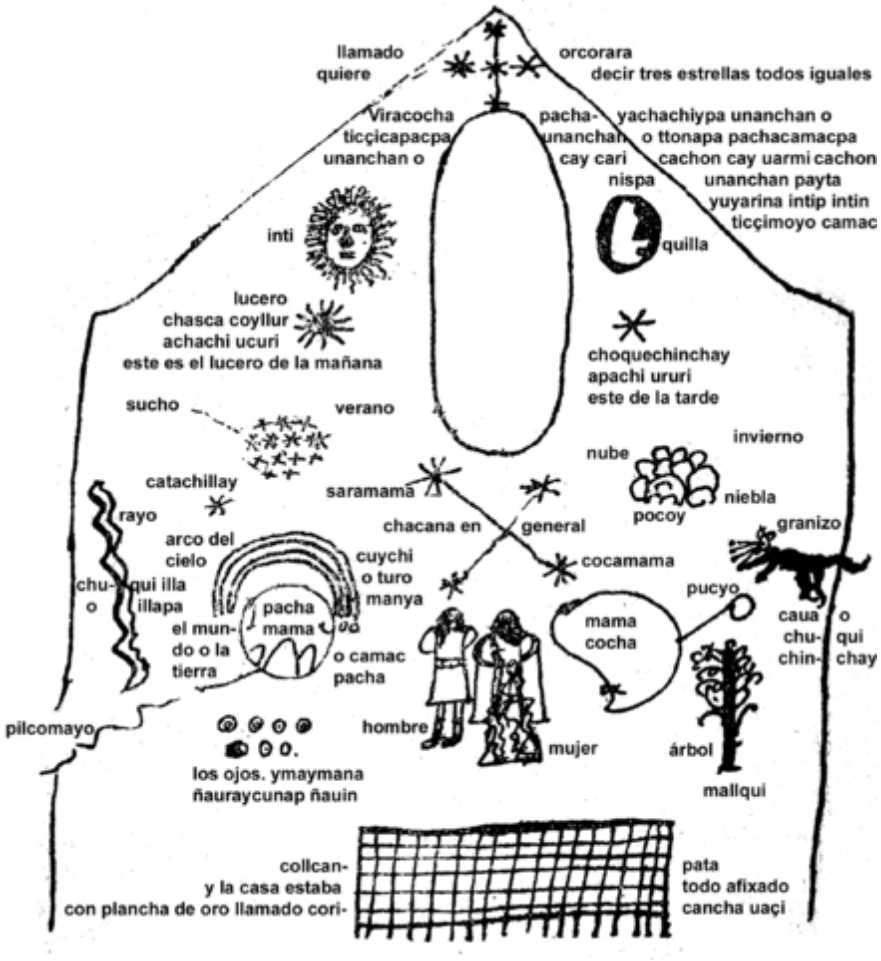

Figure 12: Santa Cruz Pacahcuti. (Juan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua, 2021).

The Practicality of Sumaq Kawsay

One of the main critiques of BV/SK is that there is little evidence of its practicality or how it looks at a grassroots level in an extractive economy (Chassagne, 2019). Merino (2020) urges practical projects concerning BV to ensure the implementation of Indigenous perspectives into policy. Eliza also considered the lack of research on the practical aspects of BV or how it might be utilized beyond discourse. Thus, in this section, I will discuss the key practical elements of SK that ANDES emphasizes through their work in the PP and CP.

Barter Markets

One of the key elements of SK is a solidarity economy (Coral Guerrero et. al, 2021). Ramírez-Cendrero et al. (2017) argue that the constitutions and development plans in Bolivia and Ecuador acknowledged the Communitarian Economy as a central tenet of BV. Indeed, the "Communitarian Economy" incorporates biocentric perspectives that note "the total embeddedness of human beings within the natural environment" (Jimenez et al., 2022, pg. 1638). Additionally, solidarity economies prioritize the overall well-being of the community over the well-being of the economy (Giovannini, 2012). But what does a communitarian economy look like beyond the poor example of development plans in Ecuador and Bolivia? The Chalakuy Maize Park (CP) offers a better example of alternative economic practices based on solidarity and reciprocity through their focus on food sovereignty through barter. The CP "promotes a model of food sovereignty based on the ancestral practice of bartering food. The barter markets of Lares are part of a sophisticated Andean agri-food system linking communities located between 1,000 and 5,500 metres above sea level" (Argumedo et al., 2021, pg. 20). "These markets specialise in the non-monetary exchange of native crops and seeds, including tubers, grains, fruits, medicinal and ornamental plants and wild edible species produced in each of the altitude niches of the landscape" (Argumedo and Pimbert, 2010). Scholars like Jimenez et al. (2022) situate practices like barter under the "Communitarian Economy," noting that Indigenous organizations prioritize such notions over Western economic models.

But beyond the conceptualization as an alternative economic model, barter in the region also has practical orientation as an alternative to traditional economic models based on accumulation and competition. Qawari, the woman I stayed with in Ccachin, participates almost every week. She explained that exchanging food has always been a custom in the Lares region and explained that women from different communities in the region meet early

in the morning every Monday, to continue the tradition of exchange. The practice of barter continues traditions of reciprocity and the act itself requires trust, as it depends on being in good relationship. As Qawari noted, while this practice is deeply embedded in the values related to SK and reciprocity, it also exists because some individuals lack the finances to buy certain goods, so they travel to Choquecancha for barter. Qawari began, "there is no money and no work for women and so they exchange. If people have money they can spend it to buy things, but the barter market is an option for people who don't have money."[49] According to research in the CP, "barter markets are overseen by women and guided by Andean values such as reciprocity play an important role in ensuring nutritious diets and maintaining Andean values, ecological knowledge and agrobiodiversity" (Argumedo et al., 2021, pg. 4).[50] Through the continuation of this practice, local food systems are strengthened and sustained through the exchange of native food crops and cultural values like social reciprocity (Argumedo et al., 2021).

Beyond supporting the continuation of Barter in the Lares region, ANDES is also attempting to revitalize the barter system that once existed in Pisac, where the practice has been lost. By engaging communities from the PP in barter with communities from the CP, ANDES is creating a barter exchange. I was able to witness one non-monetized barter exchanges between the CP and PP in the central plaza of Pisac. It was a Sunday morning around 8 am, and trucks of people and large bags of food arrived at the central plaza. The woman and men from the PP began to unload their bags of potatoes, Oka[51], and other goods. Soon after, the women from the CP arrived with bags full of maize. Once both groups were set up, the bartering began, as women walked up to other women to start the process of

[49] Interview, August 11th, 2022
[50] The fact that these markets are overseen and ran by women is particularly refreshing, and worth noting, particularly in this heavily male-dominated environment.
[51] Oka is a sweet, tuberous vegetable grown in the Andes.

exchange. “I’ll have the small bucket of oka, and you’ll receive this bag of maize.” The process itself seemed to require trust and care, and yet it was disorderly. This was mostly because as the women were exchanging their goods, tourists walked around curiously, taking photos, and trying to understand what was going on. Despite the interruption, placing the exchange in a public place may further center alternative forms of economic exchange, engendering curiosity for alternatives. By strengthening and continuing practices related to the solidarity or communitarian economy, ANDES is utilizing this practice to center Indigenous economic systems based on reciprocity and community well-being. Additionally, the continuing practices of barter illuminate the practicality of SK as a living alternative, not a worldview of the past, but a living, breathing practice. Kimmerer (2013) notes that there are other ways of organizing ourselves to sustain life, explaining gift economies, and describing ecology and economy as systems of *relationship*.

Figure 13: Barter market exchange in Pisac.

Food Sovereignty

Related to barter and exchange, ANDES works closely with communities in both parks to strengthen food sovereignty, which stands against the neoliberal model of agriculture, advocating for communities' rights to their own food and emphasizing alternative methods like organic farming and agroecological practices (Huambachano, 2018). Food sovereignty was termed by the largest peasant organization in the world, La Via Campesina, defined as "the right of peoples to define their own food and agriculture; to protect and regulate domestic agricultural production and trade in order to achieve sustainable development objectives; to determine the extent to which they want to be self-reliant; to restrict the dumping of products in their markets" (Pierrick, 2003). According to Guardiola & Garcia-Quero (2014) food sovereignty is related to both barter and philosophies of living well. Relatedly, Huambachano (2018) argues that "Indigenous food sovereignty underscores the revitalization of Indigenous food systems as a tool for reclaiming their traditional food practices and principles" (pg. 1022). Ingrid Hall believes that the revitalization of Indigenous food systems and a focus food sovereignty for Quechua communities is crucial, especially in a context where large-scale agro-industry is valued over the livelihoods of campesinos[52]. Not surprisingly, contemporary views on food security encourage increased agricultural production and technological methods, which relates to what McMichael (2011) calls the "globalizing food regime" which favors large-scale production and encourages export across borders (Huambachano, 2018).

These contemporary views on food security and farming relate closely to the fears that Chirapa and other residents expressed in Chapter 4 concerning the fate of small-scale agriculturalists. Additionally, the sentiments from Chapter 4 also identify some of the

[52] Online interview, November 30th, 2022

challenges for food sovereignty, as younger generations would rather buy potatoes than grow them. According to Swiderska et al. (2022) “Indigenous and traditional food systems face multiple threats from industrial agriculture, development, modern education and outmigration—which often affect both bio-diversity and culture and are likely to be mutually reinforcing given the links between them” (pg. 20). Indeed, the fears of individuals in the parks of losing SK are warranted. ANDES recognizes the strength of the larger policy frameworks that affect food systems in the Andes and is working to ensure communities have the right to define their own food and agriculture in the context of climate change.

In the PP and CP, food sovereignty is of utmost importance in maintaining balance and achieving SK, and in turn, SK also imbues communities in the parks to “enact sovereignty over their food systems” (Huambachano, 2018). Huambachano (2018) discusses the “intergenerational accumulation of knowledge about food security grounded on distinctive Indigenous cosmovision that reflects a holistic condition of equilibrium and harmony with all their community members (humans and all nonliving things). Coupled with a collectivistic, self-governance, and self-determination approach enables them to develop capabilities for the sustainable control and accessibility to land and natural resources for their food sustenance” (pg. 1021). For example, there are many different techniques for facilitating food security in the parks such as freeze drying potatoes (moraya and chunyo) and creating family seedbanks. Many Indigenous seed systems are guided by Indigenous core values of sharing and reciprocity, and balance with nature (Swiderska et al., 2009). Additionally, ANDES is working to reintroduce and repatriate certain native seed varieties to the park communities. Lüttringhaus et al. (2017), defines repatriation as “the process of returning native germplasm back to its place of origin, allowing a dynamic exchange between ex situ (out of native env) and in situ (in native env) conditions” (pg. 1). “For example, in Lares,

some quinoa and amaranthus varieties have been lost, and ANDES is trying to reintroduce these" (Argumedo et al., pg. 8). Thus, ANDES strengthens food security and sovereignty through revitalizing the practice of barter in both parks and focusing on techniques for food security related to the cosmovision of SK. Crucially, ANDES also recognizes how people in the parks connect to land and food, acknowledging that certain crops represent kin and family (Huambachano, 2018).

To Quechua communities, food sovereignty is closely intertwined with the potato. The potato contributes greatly to Andean food security and cultural diversity, and inspires pride in Peru (Argumedo & Pimbert, 2005). Speaking of the cultural importance of the potato, the park communities lobbied for and were granted legal recognition of the potato (Argumedo & Stenner, 2008). Indeed, the PP "celebrates the tremendous diversity of native potato varieties and other native Andean crops characteristic of Andean food systems" (Pimbert, 2006). ANDES also advocated to create a special agreement with the International Potato Center, in which "Andean communities can unlock the potato gene bank and repatriate biological diversity to farming communities and the natural environment for local and global benefit" ("New Potato Deal in Peru", 2005). This agreement forbids the privatization of Indigenous genetic knowledge, thus protecting local livelihoods, customs, and ways of living. Actions like this strengthen collectivistic, self-determined approaches for control of land and food sustenance, securing the futures of small scall agriculturalists in the Andes (Huambachano, 2018). Thus, the work of ANDES is crucial to ensuring biodiverse ecosystems in the Andes that facilitate food sovereignty and defend Indigenous knowledge and customary laws and practices. Huambachano (2018) contends that by restoring localized food systems, Indigenous peoples are asserting their aims to nurture relationships with all living beings, and thus articulating their self-determination to live apart from the neoliberal

order. These assertions are powerful, but multiply when they are supported through the platform of BV/SK through partnerships with NGOs.

Biocultural Products as Grassroots Innovations

Beyond centering and supporting practices like bater and defending food sovereignty, ANDES is also working to bring innovation into their work as well through the creation of biocultural product collectives. Eliza from the MOC reflected on the differences between valorizing ancestral knowledges related to potatoes, and plants, etc. and the extent to which that knowledge becomes sold as a product in the neoliberal market economy. "For example, ancestral knowledge related to native potatoes then becomes a product that is then attached to the system. There is still ancestral knowledge about plants, there is a project called Núa, it is a project of women who are also using their knowledge and then selling the products. The thing is that in the end they are also connected to the market, not necessarily alternative."[53] Eliza's analysis is interesting, but it does not resonate fully with the contexts of the Potato and CPs. It is also very much focused on the idea that alternative means not connected to the market, which I find challenging, as the "market" and larger policies based on accumulation and privatization have affected almost every community. The project mentioned by Eliza, the women's collective, is similar to the biocultural product collectives that exist in both parks. In the PP, the collective is a group of six Quechua women who have deep knowledge of traditional Andean plants and their healing properties. A similar entity exists in the CP, with about fifteen women involved. Both collectives use their traditional plant knowledge with additional training from ANDES to create and sell goods, like teas and lotions to a café in Cusco. ANDES also hosts workshops where the women can learn to make salves, soap, and shampoo. I attended a meeting of the collective in Lares where the women were to report on

[53] Interview, August 23rd, 2022

their experience of trying to sell the products they made. Many women had not tried selling the product yet. The few that had tried said it was difficult and people in their community didn't have the money to buy the product from them. Alternatively, when I stayed with Qawari, she pulled out the lotion and the shampoo she had learned to make, and shared that she had been excited to learn these skills. She hadn't yet tried to sell it, but she was glad to learn how to make something of her knowledge of plants.

Jimenez et al. (2022) identify the biocultural products collectives as "market innovations," which operate "in open contradiction to Western-centric logic of accumulation at the expense of the environment" (pg. 12). These micro-enterprise endeavors center the solidarity economy, by focusing on the well-being of members rather than maximizing profit (Jimenez et al, 2022) Also, in favor of grassroots innovation, Giovannini (2012) notes that community enterprises akin to the biocultural products collectives must entertain collective dimensions and the promotion of Indigenous views of development, which these groups actively do. These groups while influenced by neoliberal policy frameworks, continue to practice alternatives, emphasizing the political force of people wanting to live different lives, as they weave together ancestral knowledge with ideas and opportunities coming from the outside (Escobar, 2020). The biocultural product groups also provide a practical example of an alternative model of development, not based on accumulation but on the sharing and valuation of ancestral knowledge. Indeed, communities practicing alternatives through barter, food sovereignty, and through the creation of grassroots innovations with the support of ANDES are all causes for hope in constructing alternatives to development based on the interests of Quechua peoples. As the biocultural products groups are new projects in both Parks, I do not have the data to assess to what extent this practice of selling and packaging cultural products defends the interests of people in the CP and PP. However, I will attempt to

address this through other avenues, articulating the importance of NGO alliances with Indigenous communities in Chapter 6.

Closing

Acknowledging the diversity of ways that BV and SK are understood and mobilized illustrates the plurality of these concepts and their strengths and weaknesses in creating new openings for understanding human-nature relationships. ANDES utilizes the discourse of SK to defend the biocultural rights of Indigenous peoples in the Andean region, while other NGOs utilize BV discourse for aspirational purposes. I do not have extended engagement with other NGOs as I do with ANDES, so I am unable to compare these with the richness I would hope for. However, all these organizations have created a platform for discussion by mobilizing the discourses of BV and SK. ANDES utilizes the discourse of SK well by braiding it with notions of food sovereignty and Indigenous economic systems, helping to create convergences and catalyze a "chain of meanings" that can help facilitate transformation (Beling et al., 2021 & Villalba, 2013, pg. 1439). It is also interesting to recognize the role that ANDES plays in shaping how Technicos speak about SK as the center of their world, as they are encouraged to mobilize their cultural heritage to encourage others to reimagine human-nature relationships. However, May (2022) acknowledges that a "more nuanced approach inclusive of ontological ambiguities, is necessary to … move abstract discussions closer to the dynamic and entangled realities of Indigenous lives" (pg. 30). Indeed, Hall (2022) acknowledges these discourses are often foreign to Indigenous communities, and questions "by what means can SK as a discourse defends the interests of Indigenous people in the Andes" (pg. 106). Beyond the discourse of SK, ANDES is clearly defending the interests and rights of people in the parks through the revitalization of practices related closely to the cosmovision of SK. For example, by forbidding the privatization of Indigenous genetic knowledge, ANDES is protecting collectivistic, self-determined

approaches to living well (Huambachano, 2018). SK in practice encourages and promotes an alternative model of agriculture that preserves biodiversity, sustains the health of natural and human ecosystems, and instills greater sovereignty and well-being. Chapter 6 will attempt to relate the discourse and practice of SK/ BV to the lived realities of Indigenous peoples in the Andean region of Peru. This analysis is paramount to understanding the depth of meaning that this "lifeway" holds for Quechua communities and how to defend their own interests in pursuit of good living, on their own terms.[54]

[54] Interview, July 27th, 2022

“When the Earth Becomes an ‘It’” The Cherokee poet Marilou Awiakta[55]

When the people call the Earth “Mother,”

They take with love

And with love give back

So that all may live.

When the people call Earth “it,”

They use her Consume her strength.

Then the people die.

Already the sun is hot

Out of season.

Our Mother’s breast Is going dry.

She is taking all green

Into her heart

And will not turn back

Until we call her

By her name.

[55] Soured from Shurbutt (2005).

Chapter 6: Weaving Alliances that Defend "Lifeways"

"Indigenous peoples have a long experience in dealing with modernity and are a real source of inspiration for those imagining its end. I see again a very ***creative alliance*** *with those inside modern thinking who are seeking alternatives" (Escobar, 2020, pg. 117).*

Introduction

Chapter 4 illustrates perspectives on SK from communities in the PP and CP while Chapter 5 discussed the utilization of the discourse of BV/SK by NGOs for strategic purposes. This chapter draws on previous empirical claims to interrogate the efficacy of SK as a beneficial discourse and as a platform to articulate the interests of Quechua communities. Entertaining a specific focus on ANDES, Chapter 6 depicts alliances of NGOs with Indigenous communities in Peru (Clifford, 2004). I argue that such alliances valorize, revitalize, and articulate Indigenous everyday practices and knowledge into a larger political platform, thus braiding together the practice and discourse of SK (Merino, 2019). In the case of Peru, the role of NGOs in utilizing SK is particularly important, considering the ability to make articulations to the state and the importance of small-scale agriculturalists and in-situ conservation for development (Hall, 2022).

In this chapter, I will illustrate how the work of ANDES in close collaboration with park communities distinguishes SK as an essential part of BCH and further, as a platform to articulate alternative visions of development. Through a holistic approach, ANDES acknowledges the intertwined nature of local economies, territories, cultural and spiritual values, and the larger socio-ecological context through utilizing the Indigenist discourse of SK (Swiderska et al., 2006). Based on my empirical evidence in conversation with the literature emerging from Peru, I defend that SK is engaged as a political platform that articulates social and ecological demands based on principles of reciprocity and balance. I illustrate ANDES' facilitation of mutual respect with park communities and the revitalization

of practices that make up BCH. I deepen a sense of hope for the respectful mobilization of SK to both preserve and pass down the "lifeway" but also to recognize it on an international scale, instilling a bio-cultural ethic, and deepening solidarity towards the lives of Quechua peoples, bridging ontological divides. Further, I posit that the collaborative and respectful engagement of narratives of living well helps to reinstall new stories about how to relate to the living world, encouraging people to think differently, and thus allowing for the construction of development alternatives based on living practices.

Mobilizing Indigeneity

In this section, I will summarize the background of Indigeneity in the Peruvian Andes and will consider ANDES' use of the Indigenist discourse of SK. Indigeneity in Peru is complex, which can be observed through the current political situation. Coronel (n.d.) notes that the Indigenous population in Peru was disenfranchised for most of the 20th century and then was terrorized by the Shining Path, a terrorist group. Over the years, Indigenous peoples in Peru have struggled to organize and articulate their demands, dismissed by political elites in Lima (Coronel, n.d.). Historically, Peru is known to have a weak Indigenous movement, particularly in the Andes, despite 25% of Peru's population self-identifying as Indigenous (Hall, 2022; Merino, 2019). Merino (2019) argues that "this weakness is characterized by limited Indigenous political identity ... Identity is considered limited because of the general use of socio-economic (peasantry) rather than ethnic identities" (pg. 513). According to Canessa (2018), "during the 1990s, highlanders in Peru did not see themselves as Indigenous but, rather as campesinos" (pg. 315). But recently, Indigenous/ campesino communities in Peru are now "demanding dignity and a political system that guarantees their rights, fed up with a human rights crisis fueled by racism and stigmatization" ("Lethal State Repression in Peru", 2023). Indeed, Coronel (n.d.) argues that "it is time to explore innovative ways to engage civil society organizations in the reform debate and give the people a sense of being

heard and having an impact on political decisions." Thus, this chapter discusses creative ways ANDES furthers the interests of Quechua communities in the PP and CP.

Tammy Stenner, educator and researcher at ANDES, noted how the pride in Indigeneity has grown over the past 20 years. She noted that this resurgence of pride in Indigenous ways of knowing is something to be proud of, and ANDES has helped to facilitate this growing recognition and pride, at the local level and at the national and international scale.[56] Canessa (2018) notes that "although contemporary Indigenous identities usually draw on historical local struggles for justice, in practice, it is very often the case that people come to identify as Indigenous through a dynamic and dialectic engagement with international actors, reflecting their interaction with the discourses of global networks of international institutions and NGOs" (pg. 314). This could very well be the case of the communities in both parks, as pride in Indigeneity has shifted over the years. Based on the empirical evidence I gathered from individuals in the parks, most identified as campesinos but also proudly, as Indigenous, based on their customs, traditions, and knowledge.[57] Interestingly, Hall (2022) notes that some communities in the PP do not identify as Indigenous but rather as campesinos. However, Indigeneity is mobilized by ANDES in larger political processes because Indigenist framings gains greater rapport with international audiences.

SK Empoyed Through Quechua Terms and Andean Frames

Svampa (2019) notes the opportunity to articulate and valorize the needs of campesinos and Indigenous peoples, and ANDES seizes this opportunity through the utilization of SK as an essential part of BCH. Furthermore, ANDES mobilizes the Indigenist discourse of SK strategically, as the mobilization of Indigeneity has been recognized as powerful, specifically to gain traction with international audiences (Canessa, 2018). Thus, the

[56] Interview, August 17th, 2022
[57] I note that I mostly had access to the Technicos, who acknowledged their Indigeneity, though this may be shaped through working with ANDES, as Canessa (2018) theorizes.

focus on the Indigenist discourse of SK is closely linked to its mobilizing capacity with wider audiences and international institutions but also the meaning for Quechua communities. Cuestas-Caza (2018) sees SK as an essential part of the Indigenous social project grounded in Andean ways of life. Unlike the terminology of BV, SK "emerges and develops within an Andean cultural reference, which resists cultural homogenization through language recovery and Andean practices" (Cuestas Caza, 2018, pg. 59). It is both useful and respectful for ANDES to engage with SK and other notions like ayllu and chacra, that hold meaning for communities in both parks. Additionally, ANDES focuses on local concepts and practices, but also acknowledge and center Quechua language. For example, ayni (reciprocity) and chalayplaysa (barter) are developed within both park communities by ANDES, relating to their focus on Andean life-ways and Quechua language. To Kovach (2021), "Words matter... in this spirit, it is useful to give attention to the terminology found within Indigenous community-engaged research" (pg. 111). ANDES also engages the ayllu system, by acknowledging all the threads that compose it, Runa ayllu, Auki ayllu, and Sallqa ayllu to defend how sense of place is different and how place emerges through the communities in the Parks (de la Cadena, 2015). The ayllu system acknowledges the essential components of living well in a way that is holistic and respectful, attached to Andean frames of reference. Thus, ANDES has noted the importance of Quechua to the understandings of SK. Nevertheless, the strategic engagement of SK must constantly be questioned, with consideration for what communities are gaining from the utilization of SK and whether it defends the interests of Quechua communities or the interests of ANDES. I will now attempt to illustrate how alliances with NGOs can respectfully defend the interests of Indigenous groups.

Cultivating Mutual Respect in IBCHTs through Coalitions

ANDES and other NGOs utilize SK/ BV for their own means and purposes, which differs from the understanding and practices of SK in Quechua communities in the Andean region. However, there exists the possibility of alliances between NGOs and Indigenous communities to defend the interest of Indigenous peoples. Merino (2019) notes the importance of alliances forged between national and global NGOs and Indigenous groups in Peru. The partnership of ANDES and the park communities depicts a respectful coalition, that is built on relations of genuine respect. Chapter 4 discussed the lamentations of locals in the PP who fear losing the knowledge associated with SK. This coalition acknowledges these fears, while enabling Indigenous communities in both Parks to articulate and pass down their values, to younger generations in their own communities, but also to a wider global audience, including a robust network of Mountain Indigenous Peoples. The articulations shared by this coalition can "create new conditions for solidarity, activism, and participation" (Clifford, 2004, pg. 22). ANDES helps to make known the practices and everyday realities of Indigenous peoples, allowing space for the assertion of their practices and pride in their lifeways and values, even in the context of systemic racism in the Peruvian state (Coronel, n.d.).

ANDES cultivates mutual respect through the park communities by emphasizing learning exchange and involvement through decolonized action research. According to action research conducted in the PP, "the exchange of experiences and knowledge among the PP communities, scientists and policymakers has supported the development of local, national and international policies to protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, traditional agricultural and food systems, and the rights of Mother Earth, 'la Pacha Mama" (Argumedo et al., 2021, pg. 7). Thus, research outputs in the parks have sought to defend the rights of Indigenous peoples and their interests. Acknowledging the depoliticization of Indigenous issues on the

national and international agendas, ANDES facilitates the International Network of Mountain Indigenous Peoples (*INMIP*). INMIP "aims to strengthen the resilience of Indigenous Mountain peoples in the face of global change by revitalising BCH, particularly spirituality, Indigenous knowledge, customary laws, biodiversity and Indigenous landscapes; and to advocate for policies that protect the rights of mountain Indigenous peoples" (*INMIP*, para. 1). The network noted in a recent declaration on solutions to the climate crisis, "as proud members of ancient cultures who possess and maintain a wealth of knowledge, practices and strategies on how to live in harmony with nature, we reject all false solutions to the climate crisis... and reaffirm our right to food sovereignty, which is intrinsically linked to our BCH, especially to our spiritual relationship with Mother Earth" (*Declaration of the International Network of Mountain Indigenous Peoples*, para. 3*).* As such, ANDES facilitation of INMIP further strengthens the networks of communities who understand their rights as linked to BCH and the rights of the Earth and instills a deeper capacity for networks of solidarity in the international community (Clifford, 2004). Indeed, this proclamation also centers the practices related to SK in Chapter 5, of barter as an essential part of BCH and food sovereignty as a right of Quechua communities. Networks like INMIP are important because they can help put "alternatives" into motion, by helping to create a common language in which to share Indigenous ways of knowing and to further rights for Indigenous peoples, breaking down the nature-culture divide (Copeland, 2018; Hall, 2022; May 2022). Indeed, the network has hosted three international learning exchanges that "call on civil society organizations, governments, and academics to consider the importance of BCH and traditional knowledge systems for climate governance" (*INMIP*). These horizontal networks and learning exchanges are important for sharing practices and centering BCH on a wider scale, making articulations to inform policies that support Indigenous knowledge systems.

Dempsey (2009) offers a critical view of the work of NGOs with the work of grassroots representation, noting that "NGOs and other groups may be more easily read as non-patronizing, or as the progressive embodiment of alternative or resistant development when they align themselves with the local community" (pg. 340). She continues that "in the process of attempting to improve a group's circumstances, NGOs may reinforce forms of knowledge preventing these very groups from eventually speaking on their own behalf" (Dempsey, 2009, pg. 341). Dempsey makes an important point, but I argue against the "glorification of the grassroots" that she suggests. Though this is often the result of NGOs representing local groups, ANDES's approach attempts to center community voices by creating networks of solidarity that resist the homogenization of Indigenous cosmovision. Shepherd (2005) questions "to what extent development's enduring economic assumptions and expertise-based methods restrict and constrain alternative forms of development that genuinely value local knowledge and other ways of being in the world different from our own" (pg. 43). Tammy Stenner, educator and researcher at ANDES notes that ANDES' work may be political in that it affects policies, but at its heart, it is holistic, as it sees and acknowledges issues from multiple perspectives and based on interconnectedness.[58] ANDES supports local knowledge systems and other ways of being in the world so as to construct, rather than constrain alternative forms of development. McGregor (2018) notes that "Indigenous peoples at the grassroots level require support in their efforts to imagine and seek alternative futures and facilitate their participation in matters of national and global concern" (pg. 20). ANDES supports the efforts of Quechua communities to live on their own terms and defends their interests through the revitalization of practices and the engagement in matters of international concern.

[58] Online interview, February 16th, 2023

Restoring and Revitalizing the Practices of Sumaq Kawsay

Radcliffe (2012) mentions that "in practice, market-based inequalities and postcolonial hierarchies have not been fully addressed, evidencing a continuation in the cultural, political, social and epistemological oppression of the Indigenous ways of life and ancestral practices" (pg. 246). However, coalitions such as that of ANDES and the Parks seek to move beyond post-colonial hierarchies, by recognizing, revitalizing, and restoring the cultural, spiritual, and ecological practices of SK, thus helping to pass down its essential knowledge to younger generations. As I noted in Chapter 4, there is a shifting of cultural values in some communities due to climate change and globalization. Some individuals in the parks noted these value shifts as a focus on buying food from the market rather than planting food or following traditional agricultural practices. The preoccupations that Chirapa shared exhibit the cruciality of alliances of NGOs and Quechua communities. These alliances are even more crucial in the Peruvian context, in which the state devalues small-scale agriculture and Indigenous knowledge.[59] Therefore, these alliances valorize Indigenous knowledges and revitalize practices lost or considered unimportant, but which are essential to living well. Further, the work of ANDES seeks to combat Indigenous peoples losing their identities to the influence of neoliberal policies by reinstating historical practices, rituals, and ceremonies that defend ancestral wisdom and food sovereignty.

ANDES's work seeks to holistically promote Andean cultural and spiritual values and knowledge through IBCHTs. Chapter 5 touched upon the revitalization of practices of barter, agricultural rituals, and engagement of plant knowledge through biocultural products, and I will now illustrate how the revitalization of these practices emphasizes Indigenous people's collective self-determination and cultural rights for the preservation of the living world (Huambachano, 2018). With the case of barter, ANDES seeks to revitalize the system of

[59] Online interview, November 30th, 2022

barter that once existed in the Pisac region, where the practice has been lost, by engaging communities from the PP. By revitalizing the practice, they are attempting to center Indigenous economic systems related to reciprocity and solidarity, integral to ideals of good living. These efforts for revitalization are supported by people living in the PP who mourn the loss of this tradition over the years, while the tradition is deeply embedded in the CP, which offers optimism for the continuation of cultural traditions that stand in stark contrast to neoliberal values of privatization and accumulation, and instead prioritize solidarity, reciprocity, and biodiversity. Huambachano (2018) argues that the revitalization of Indigenous food systems "is a critical tool in revitalizing their culture, wellbeing, and thereby their rights to food sovereignty. In effect, Indigenous peoples globally are asserting their self-determination efforts for the preservation of land – Mother Earth by restoring localized food systems" (pg. 1024).

Another example of the revitalization of cultural and spiritual values is the focus on biocultural indicators and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) which I focused on in Chapter 4, through the photo/video component. ANDES' researcher, Stenner, recognizes that Indigenous knowledge is intrinsically important, and it does not need to be validated by science to make it worthwhile and notes that knowledge comes in many forms.[60] Indigenous scholars note that traditional ecological knowledge is place-based and cannot be attributed to a particular source (Huambachano, 2018). McGregor (2004) suggests that "to understand where TEK comes from one must start with Indigenous people and our own understanding of the world," (pg. 386). For example, ANDES recognizes that the mountain gods, or Apus, in the Lares region are not only a spiritual connection to Andean peoples, but they impart knowledge for local farmers (biocultural indicators) that tell them when to plant for a good harvest and for a SK (Argumedo et al., 2021 pg. 17). These indicators are recognized as

[60] Interview, August 17th, 2022

essential knowledge in pursuit of SK, illustrated through many of the videos taken by the Technicos in their photo/video project. According to McGregor (2018) supporting Indigenous knowledge systems is essential for the vision of living well, however, it "will be a process fraught with challenges, as dominant society will not happily embrace Indigenous knowledges (at least not on the terms of Indigenous peoples)" (pg. 9). As such, ANDES has taken a step forward by embracing not only Indigenous knowledge, but also practices like barter that emphasize community well-being and reciprocity as crucial to adapting to climate change. Nakashima (2012) notes there is an increasing realization that observations of Indigenous peoples offer crucial in-situ information for adaptation to climate change.

Another crucial component of ANDES's partnership with the park communities is the enactment of rituals related to the potato, which attempts to symbolize how wellbeing can be conceptualized to include more-than-humans. According to Huambachano (2018), food holds intangible value for Quehcua communities. According to Angé et al. (2018), ANDES is not just interested in conservation and furthering Indigenous rights, but also in expanding how outside audiences conceptualize well-being to include the more-than-human world. "The Park is not solely concerned with increasing genetic resources available to humans. On top of championing the conservation of genetic diversity, the Park also works to increase human regard towards the potato" (Angé et al., 2018, pg. 31). Indeed, respect for potatoes is a crucial concern for Quechua communities who consider respect as essential to the flourishing of potatoes, thus affecting local food security (Angé et al., 2018). Huambachano (2018) shares the intertwined nature of the health of the animated world and the health of potatoes for Quechua people in Peru: "How we work and nurture our land influences greatly on our food, and food security. I love my seeds and I cry when my potatoes do not grow and I know it is because my mother –Pachamama is unwell" (pg. 1015). Moreover, the theme of the potato, or "la tema de la papa" is a significant focus of ANDES' work, as they attempt to share with

communities outside the parks the importance of the potatoes' wellbeing for their own well-being. To translate these differences in understanding well-being, ANDES helps to create spaces where communities can come together to celebrate their visions of well-being as intertwined with the well-being of potatoes. One example is that "every year on May 30th, ANDES and the technicians come together with other members of the communities and visitors to celebrate the anniversary of the PP. Festivities include an array of activities fostering encounters with potato varieties" (Angé et al., 2018, pg. 7). One of these festivities is the practice of Papa Huatay or "Potato Tying." Angé (2021), who has spent extended periods of time in the PP described Papa Huatay as a "ceremony welcoming newly harvested potato(es) before they are stored" and "a domestic gathering intended to fasten tubers' body and spirit together" (para. 4). Every year, this festival occurs in the park to pay homage to the potato and to the Pachamama. These rituals also engage younger generations as ANDES insists that children participate in potato rituals to "remain open to the transgenerational transmission of potato expertise that is slipping away" (Angé et al., 2018, pg. 37). These findings emphasize the importance of revitalizing practices and engaging youth in these practices to recover customs that young generations tend to forget and to share them with wider audiences (Angé et al., 2018).

Angé (2021) understands practices like Papa Huatay as a "cosmopoltical intervention" in reclaiming agricultural livelihoods, particularly in highland agriculture. This is particularly resonant in the larger socio-political context of Peru that supports agroindustry rather than the livelihoods of small-scale agriculturalists in the highlands.[61] ANDES has also created a poetry contest[62] for the Biocultural Festivals they hold on the International Day of the Potato, "intended as a political act proclaiming humans' entanglement with tubers" and also as

[61] Online interview, November 30th, 2022
[62] The poem at the beginning of Chapter 2 is from this poetry contest.

"political interventions calling for interspecies respect from a wide public of potato stakeholders, including those from the agroindustry, conservation institutions or political elites" (Angé, 2021, para. 5). Angé et al. (2018) argue that "people involved in the activities learn to be affected by potatoes, "through the bodily experience of being embedded in a sensuous and affective lifeworld of the potato" (pg. 7). The authors conclude that visitors learn to be affected by potato beings through these experiences, thus beginning to bridge immense ontological divides. In this way, the PP aims to expand respect for the potato and for alternative relationships to nature, articulating the agency of other beings beyond humans in notions of well-being, one of the principal elements of SK. Kimmerer (2013) notes that "ecological restoration is inseparable from cultural and spiritual restoration and is inseparable from the spiritual responsibilities of care-giving and world-renewal" (pg. 337). These inseparable parts of restoration and renewal are not overlooked by ANDES but are recognized holistically through the revitalization of practices related to SK that are practices that Quechua communities do not want to lose, because they express and articulate their "lifeway."[63]

However, Hall (2022) claims that tensions surface on the National Potato Day, as Protestants are "uneasy with this ritual they have abandoned" and Catholics identify the event as a practice that was "formerly experienced as stigmatizing" (pg. 105). Though Clifford (2004) notes that for marginalized Indigenous people to say, "we exist" and "we are living differently" in performances and publications is a powerful political act (pg. 9). Furthermore, ANDES's acknowledgment of ritual practices like Papa Huatay, celebration of the day of the potato, and poetry contests are attempts to widen notions of community to outsiders, instilling a larger political platform of SK illustrating that people are indeed living differently, even in the context of histories and presents of stigmatization. ANDES both valorizes and articulates

[63] Interview, July 27th, 2022

the way of living in the parks as worthy and important, to the communities themselves and to outside audiences. As such, ANDES helps to create spaces for these political moments while cultivating pride in alternatives. Merino points out that literature suggests practices related to SK are inspirations to think about and create new policies that escalate from the local level to the national level bringing marginalized actors into the debate on how to live well.[64] Lastly, Kimmerer (2013) notes that "one of our responsibilities as human people is to find ways to enter into reciprocity with the more-than-human world. We can do it through gratitude, through ceremony, though land stewardship, science, art, and in everyday acts of practical reverence" (pg. 190). ANDES is encouraging wider audiences to step into reciprocity with the more-than-human world through ceremony, science, and deeper engagement with and communication of the ontologies that exist in the park communities.

Recognizing Alternative Relationships to the Living World

May (2022) notes that for discourses like SK to gain traction with different actors, they must appeal to multicultural sensibilities and a global audience. Oftentimes, protecting such worlds can be done through utilizing symbols of alterity, in which SK/ BV are constructed as "alternatives to development" in the academic literature (Blaser, 2013; Hall, 2022). ANDES recognizes the complexity of translating ontological difference, and thus uses tools of culture to help bridge divides, especially within the Peruvian context that neglects to view Andean peoples as Indigenous and does not recognize SK (Hall, 2022). Hall (2022) argues that "the particular ontologies hold by peasants in the Park do not make for a promising argument at the national level, at least not from an institutional perspective" (pg. 104). Therefore, within Peru, translating the values and practices of SK is more difficult, and is rather engaged through cultural differences. Hall (2022) argues that at the national level in Peru, cultural differences tend to be more palatable as an organizing principle. Whereas, in

[64] Online interview, September 13th, 2022.

the international sphere, there may be more space for articulating alternative relationships to the living world (Hall, 2022). Thus, there is a balance that ANDES must strike, in attempting to bridge ontological and cultural divides. ANDES attempts to bridge these divides by bringing people into the parks to learn to be affected by more-than-human beings and influencing policy on the national and global scale.

I defend that ANDES' alliance with the Quechua communities in both parks serves to valorize and center different ways of relating to the natural world in the national and international arena, cultivating what Hall (2022) calls "ontological diplomacy." Indeed, ANDES has positioned itself strategically to gain traction with different audiences while centering articulations of alternative visions of conservation. Burman (2017) might consider ANDES' work as an act of "ontological disobedience" in which "beings from other ontologies (are) introduced into the dominant political debate and the climate change debate" (pg. 932). Hall (2022) argues that "ANDES engages in an effort at ontological diplomacy trying to make… the main international institution[65] involved in environmental conservation and in recognizing the rights of local and Indigenous communities… recognize the existence of alternative relationships to the environment" (pg. 105). ANDES does not "extract" nor depoliticize everyday practices of world-making in both parks. Rather, they engage these concepts holistically in a broader platform to further divergent worlds (de la Cadena, 2015; Stengers, 2007), creating a space for expanding visions of well-being, through creating networks of solidarity and mutual learning between Mountain Indigenous people, outside actors, and audiences. Burman (2017) continues that realities like those in the parks contain the "potential to challenge coloniality/modernity and to engender alternatives" (pg. 934).

[65] Hall (2022) identifies this institution as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and pinpoints the working group on article 8(j). This institution focuses on *in situ* conservation and Indigenous groups.

Beyond the international arena, ANDES helps those who encounter the work of the PP and CP to see relationships to mountains and potatoes as beyond ritual or religion, or belief, but rather "a presence enacted through everyday practices" (de la Cadena, 2015, pg. 26). de la Cadena (2010) suggests that if we "slow down, suspend our assumptions and the ideas that they would lead to, we may perceive how this emergence alters the terms of the political" (pg. 360). As a visitor myself to the PP and CP, I acknowledge the forced time to slow down, and perceive in a new way through participation in daily practices like ayni and walking by the lagunas in the early morning light. Through homestays with residents like Chirapa, I noticed myself being affected by the mountains surrounding me, learning to cultivate reverence for all around me. Angé et al. (2018) believes that people partaking in rituals in the parks can indeed learn to be affected by the potatoes and mountains, expanding their notions of well-being to include other entities of the living world. ANDES' focus on the practices associated with SK considers that worlds are enacted through everyday practices (Escobar, 2020). By recognizing the different ontologies in the parks and sharing them through Quechua language and Andean references, ANDES is "resisting the tendency to represent the world as if it were only one" (Escobar, 2020, pg. 25). Thus, ANDES' work creates linkages between the everyday lives of Andean peoples with alternative visions of development, thus engaging with the larger disagreement on relations between nature and humanity, creating openings for new stories to be told about how to nurture the living world (de la Cadena, 2015; Hall, 2022).

Constructing Alternatives

Sergio from CBC reflected that many communities do not have the means to put alternatives into motion[66], which relates to the work of May (2022), in Guatemala, in which he describes the Tz'utujil community of San Pedro la Laguna as "enmeshed in the very

[66] Online interview, August 4th, 2022

systems that oppress them, and lack the means to put alternatives into motion" (Copeland 2018: 17, as cited in May, 2022). Thus, the construction of alternatives can often be facilitated by coalitions of NGOs that can create broader platforms, illustrated through the partnerships between ANDES and the park communities. Tapias Torrado (2020) discusses a "braid of action", in her work with environmental defenders which may serve as a helpful metaphor for coalitions between NGOs and Quechua communities. The different strands of BV/SK are interwoven through a similar "braid of action" by ANDES, defending the interests and aspirations of Quechua communities. Escobar (2021) continues the metaphor of a weaving, noting "Indigenous communities' capacity to define their own forms of modernity and find nourishment in their own histories, intricately weaving Indigenous and local practices with those that are not, creating worlds composed of different cultural strands" (pg. 105). Thus, while Indigenous communities interweave practices from the outside and their own ancestral practices, alliances with NGOs, like ANDES, are crucially important for sustaining and transmitting the knowledge and practices of SK and creating larger platforms, or "braids of action" for expressing alternative ways of living.

Cuestas Caza (2018) questions how to build a "true epistemology" of SK in which he recommends the empirical study of the knowledge and practices of Indigenous peoples based on mutual learning. The work of ANDES in both parks co-produces ideas about how to live, resignifying SK in a way that gives meaning to cultural specificities of place, valorizing Indigenous practices in broader politics. According to the theorization of Cuestas Caza (2018) utilizing SK as a mobilizing principle and noting its different epistemological and ontological bases from BV is an act of resistance. Additionally, we must not dismiss SK/BV as a "nostalgic echo of a remote past disconnected from contemporary debates" but rather consider these discourses and practices as essential to valuing anti-hegemonic worldviews

and knowledges (Vanhulst and Beling 2014, pg. 61). Merino argues for making these practices known to others, illustrating that a different world is possible.[67]

New stories are being told about how to act on behalf of life, guided by the ancestral wisdom and practices of Indigenous peoples (Stibbe, 2020, pg. 211). Thus, the engagement of SK by ANDES puts forth a story about Quechua cultural and spiritual values, that valorizes everyday practices that make worlds but also appeals to outsiders, deepening a sense of solidarity and engaging holistic understandings of the living world. Sergio envisions harmonious living as "the full expression of a dignified life. And that is a life worthy of people, but also, let's say, of nature." Relating back to the previous sections, a full expression of a dignified life requires an emphasis on mutual respect as Irnistu and Qawari emphasized in Chapter 4. The mobilization of SK by ANDES focuses on cultivating care for lived realities of Indigenous peoples in the Andes. As such, coalitions like that of the park communities and ANDES illustrate the convergences of food sovereignty and indigenous economic systems as practical, living alternatives to render SK as a platform to articulate the interests of Quechua communities, thus centering holistic socio-ecological relationships.

Closing

Though BV/SK is contested deeply in Latin America, it is nevertheless engaging a conversation on what development means for communities, opening doors for intercultural dialogue (Cuestas Caza, 2018; Escobar, 2020). Furthermore, SK/BV has transformed over space and time to become a tool for bridging ontological differences and practicing alternatives, cultivating resistance in the present. In this chapter, I focused on the effective mobilization of SK as a plural platform or "braid of action" through the collaboration of NGOs and Indigenous communities to center and valorize Indigenous worldviews (Tapias Torrado, 2020). In this way, NGOs can attempt to deepen solidarity for Indigenous

[67] Online interview, September 13th, 2022

knowledge and economic systems, bringing more-than-human actors into debates on climate change and development (Burman, 2017; de la Cadena, 2015). The utilization of SK by ANDES goes beyond a discourse used to depoliticize Indigenous politics but rather is engaged through an equitable alliance that defends the interests of Quechua people in the Andes, encouraging reciprocity with the more-than-human world.

Chapter 7: "The Mountain Is Braiding Itself with Color"[68]

Figure 14: Light illuminates the mountains. (Original photo, July 28th, 2022).

This thesis holistically and thoughtfully attempts to understand how SK is mobilized through coalitions between Quechua communities and NGOs to articulate social and ecological demands based on principles of relationality, reverence, and reciprocity. Throughout the study, I have argued that SK is engaged in ways that defend the interests of Quechua communities. I tease out this argument through a case study of two Biocultural Heritage Territories, implemented by ANDES in partnership with local communities, which emblematizes the nature of SK as lived experience and practice as well as SK as a discourse. Beyond the case study focus of the Potato Park and Chalakuy Maiz Park, I draw perspectives from different epistemic communities in Peru, from other NGOs, the MOC, and academics, illuminating the plurality of meanings and uses of BV and SK.

[68] Adopted from the poem "Papa Qhaswa, Dancing the Potato"

Scholars have noted that what BV means in practice remains unanalyzed and there is scant empirical research that focuses on SK and Indigenous peoples (Chassagne, 2019; Coral-Guerrero et al., 2021). Additionally, most of the research centered around similar themes has been focused on Bolivia and Ecuador. As such, this thesis offers an imperfect yet important attempt to address some of these gaps. This thesis articulates perspectives from Peru and teases out "Good Living" both as a situated, lived experience, as well as packaged knowledge to be engaged for specific purposes by different groups. These two different layers of BV/SK are unfurled in the previous chapters, and the consideration of both perspectives contributes to my argument. SK is deeply practical at the community scale, through sets of knowledges and practices about how to live in equilibrium with the living world and all who inhabit it. Additionally, SK engaged by NGOs can further the interests of Quechua groups in the Andes and can help instill new stories to live by.

Chapter 4 sought to analyze the first research question: *How is SK understood and enacted by Indigenous peoples in the Peruvian Andes?* By engaging stories from community members of the PP and CP, the elements of SK are explained through rich ethnographic detail interwoven with the academic literature, identifying SK as a set of rules and bundle of knowledges passed down collectively through the ayllu and chacra systems. SK integrates specific cultural practices such as barter, agricultural rituals, seed exchange, and emphasizing relationality to family, neighbors, and the more-than-human world, including plants, mountains, and animals. Furthermore, the diversity of meanings of SK is reliant upon the passage of knowledge between generations, however, communities lament that SK is not being passed down as it should be, as Chirapa noted, due to climate change and shifting cultural values (Viteri, 2002).[69] Chapter 4 also illuminates the cruciality of the work of

[69] Interview, July 27th, 2022

ANDES in revitalizing practices that younger generations may omit, thus facilitating the continued transmission of SK.

Chapter 5 and 6 answer the second research question: *How is BV/SK engaged and utilized by NGOs in the Department of Cusco to further cultural rights and construct alternatives to development?* Chapter 5 interrogates the engagement and utilization of BV and SK by NGOs in the Department of Cusco, specifically Asocación Andes. My findings illustrate that NGOs re-articulate BV for their own narratives, to ensure its attractiveness to different actors. Further, ANDES recognizes the existence of alternative relationships to the living Earth, and adopts an Indigenist discourse of SK, mobilizing a non-naturalist conceptualization of the living world (Hall, 2022). ANDES also reinforces the protection of Indigenous knowledge and culture by revitalizing many of the practices linked to SK, such as barter markets and traditional agricultural practices. ANDES also encourages Quechuca women to use their traditional ecological knowledge in thoughtful micro-enterprise endeavors. Chapter 6 investigates the efficacy of SK as a beneficial discourse and platform to articulate and defend Indigenous interests. This argument considers partnerships with NGOs as particularly important, in their ability to make articulations to the state and international institutions and agreements. SK emphasizes the importance of small-scale agriculturalists and localized food systems in Peru. Through the philosophy of SK, Quechua communities are asserting self-determination over "resources" they regard as sacred (Huambachano, 2018). Chapter 6 finalizes the assertion that ANDES effectively utilizes the Indigenist strand of SK as a plural platform or "braid of action" to center and valorize Indigenous practices, deepening solidarity for the interests and lives of Quechua communities in the Andes (Tapias Torrado, 2020).

Limitations and Further Research

As an MPhil thesis, this work carries with it many limitations. I acknowledge the difficulties in my fieldwork in terms of access. ANDES was very aware of taking the time of the people in the Parks, so unless there was already a training going on, it was difficult to gain access to communities. Despite the short amount of time I spent in Peru, I did my very best to collect rich data and triangulated my data set by engaging perspectives from other epistemic communities in Peru. I also attest that my argument is a temporary conclusion, that "this is what I believe to be true" from my limited perspective, as an outsider to this cultural context and as an MPhil student (Kovach, 2021, pg. 225). Furthermore, my arguments are up for debate and subject to different interpretations, as qualitative research by nature is subjective. I particularly enjoy how Janesick (2000) compares the qualitative researcher to the dancer. She notes, "the role of the qualitative researcher, like that of the dancer or the choreographer, demands a presence, an attention to detail, and a powerful use of the researcher's own mind and body in analysis and interpretation of the data. No one can dance your dance, so to speak. No one can choreograph your dance but you. No one can interpret your data but you" (p. 390). As a dancer myself, I note the story I tell here is complex, embodied, creative, and a dance brought into being by all the people involved in this project. It is not just my dance, but a collaborative creation that required my constant presence and attention to detail as I brought all the threads of this weaving together.

My hope is that this thesis will be followed by other work that analyzes stories of living well, and enactments of respectful partnerships that defend alternatives, instilling respect for the larger community of life. Future research should be primarily from Indigenous scholars from Peru, as their voices are missing from the academic literature on BV/SK and post-development. Additionally, research should explore the role of the state and the state's engagement of Good Living more closely, to understand "how the state might engage the

Andean cosmovision to transform itself" (Merino, 2016, pg. 279). This relates to the deeper policy implications of BV and SK in the Peruvian context, considering the current political situation in Peru. Scholars might also consider the linkages between good living philosophies and the rights of nature movement. Lastly, future scholars should question what implications these concepts carry in other contexts, considering what can be learned from the lessons of Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, and other countries in the region.

Carrying Forward the Gift

Bridging together the delicate threads of this weaving, I consider each story and living collection of data shared with me as a gift. It is an honor to carry forward these stories as I sought to illustrate a collage of the plural nature of "harmonious living" in the Peruvian Andes. These partial and overlapping strands hope to contribute to the literature on Buen Vivir/ Sumaq Kawsay and post-development. This work offers reflections on the meaning of development: What does it mean? Who is it for? And what would it mean to consider development from a relational perspective? Ronald Trosper, a citizen of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation, conceptualizes development as enhancing relationships, with the result of "living well through relationships" with humans and the living world (Trosper, 2022, pg. 3). A new vision of development must "connect the flourishing of individual human beings to that of others and the whole web of life... (and consider) nature as a gift bestowed on humans to be bequeathed as gift to others (Deneulin, 2021, pg. 54). Kimmerer (2013) notes that "if we are to persist as a species on this beautiful planet, (the next step) is to expand our protocols for gratitude to the living Earth" (para. 6) Indeed, SK, as a lived experience and a discourse, offers wisdom for how to live harmoniously in the ever-changing world through relationality and reciprocity and through respectful alliances. Chirapa expressed that "now is the moment to transmit this knowledge.

Our work, our customs, our knowledge, to continue passing down SK."[70] Ultimately, this thesis acknowledges that alliances between NGOs and Indigenous communities can sustain the knowledge systems and practices of SK, defending different models of living. I hope my research can engage a deeper sense of the practicality of Sumaq Kawsay and the potential of alliances to defend alternatives, illuminating threads on how we might exist in greater harmony with each other and the living world.

[70] Interview, July 27th, 2022

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Interview List[71]

Roger Merino, Academic. Interviewed online July 21st, 2022, September 13th, 2022.

Sergio, CBC. Interviewed August 4th, 2022.

Diego, Candidate for Lares Mayor, Interviewed August 8th, 2022

Dan, IBC. Interviewed online August 23rd, 2022.

Local in the PP. Interviewed August 26th, 2022.

Eliza, Minsitry of Culture. Interviewed online August 23rd, 2022.

Chirapa, resident of Potato Park. Interviewed July 27th, 2022.

Tumas, Tecnco in Potato Park. Interviewed July 26th, 2022.

Ingrid Hall, Academic. Interviewed online November 30th, 2022.

Tammy Stenner, Educator and researcher at ANDES. Interviewed July 19th, 2022, August 17th, 2022, and February 16th, 2023 (online).

Qawari, resident of Ccahin. Interviewed August 10 & 11th, 2022

Irnistu, resident of Choquecancha. Interviewed August 9th, 2022.

[71] Most interviews were conducted in person. Interviews with a few NGOs were conducted online. All interviewees' names have been changed, besides those who chose to be recognized by their own names