

# The Place Where Waters Murmur: Taught and Learned Andean Space

Marcelo GARRIDO PEREIRA<sup>1</sup>

*Academy of Christian Humanism University, Santiago, CHILE*

---

## Abstract

This text studies the phenomenon of teaching and learning of space, particularly the one inhabited and produced by those who live in a place of the Andes known as “the place where waters murmur” (Lugar donde murmura el agua or Putre). Notions of Humanistic Geography and Sociology of Social Experience are used to understand education as an essentially space-related experience. Likewise, ethnography is used as a methodological tool for an effective interaction. In this respect, one can state that there is a profound and accelerated process of de-spacing, where space is predominantly considered as a mere pause in the passage of time. Teaching and learning are configured in a spatiality that tends to fragment individual and collective projects of socialization and subjectivation. The informal education of space is strained by the development of a dual model of identification that tears up the unique experience of being a Putre local (putreño).

**Keywords:** Lugar, Aymara, Informal education

---

## Introduction

This text intends to give some in-depth background of the experience of space as it is taught and learned outside the school world, among inhabitants of Aymara space, at a specific location, called Putre. Its aim is to maximize the educational processes and practices of Geography as a curricular discipline, and also to maximize understanding of areas of pedagogical intervention. The antecedents here presented were gathered through a qualitative-comprehensive investigation based on a synthesis of theoretical elements from Sociology of Educational Experience and from Humanistic Geography of Behavior. From the point of view of these frameworks, all educational processes are focused towards strengthening or weakening the processes of socialization and subjectivities of individuals. Therefore, they are aimed at generating certain identifying frameworks on which to build the experience. According to this theoretical framework every educational process is linked to diverse forms of spatial construction and its

---

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Marcelo Garrido Pereira: Department of Geography, Academy of Christian Humanism University-Chile, Av. Condell # 343, Providencia, RM-Chile, mgarrido[at]academia.cl

differential configurations depends largely on bonding - the meaningful and pleasurable relationships individuals establish with their surroundings. The techniques used in the design of this investigation contain some strategies and procedures from ethnography, symbolic interactionism and grounded theory. For the stage of recollection, participant observation was used, as well as in depth interviews and cognitive maps; narrative, selective codification and theoretical matrixes were used for the stage of processing.

## Methodology

### Characteristics of Design

For the development of this investigation a methodological qualitative design was used, based on elements of ethnographic approaches (as collection techniques), symbolic interactionism (in terms of using the concept of representational order of experience) and referring to grounded theory by employing the perspective of the importance of informant sources (but not applying its codes and procedures).

### Definition of the Sample

#### *A. Selection of Location*

This article lays out part of an extended investigation that includes work in three locations in the north of Chile. These locations were selected according to three criteria. In the first place, they had to be inhabited by natives of one single ethnic grouping (Aymara), so as to be able to investigate its variance. Secondly, they also had to have a history of reciprocal complementarity in socio-productive relations. And thirdly, they had to be located in areas with a geo-ecological differential, with localities inhabited by over 50 individuals. In this way, the following locations were chosen: The items were presented in the random order; they were not grouped together with other items having a similar character. Items were rated by the participants from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). There were items worded both positively (e.g. "I like geography more than other subjects") and negatively (e.g. "Geography is not important in comparison with other courses") (Oppenheim, 1999). Negative items were reversed in scoring.

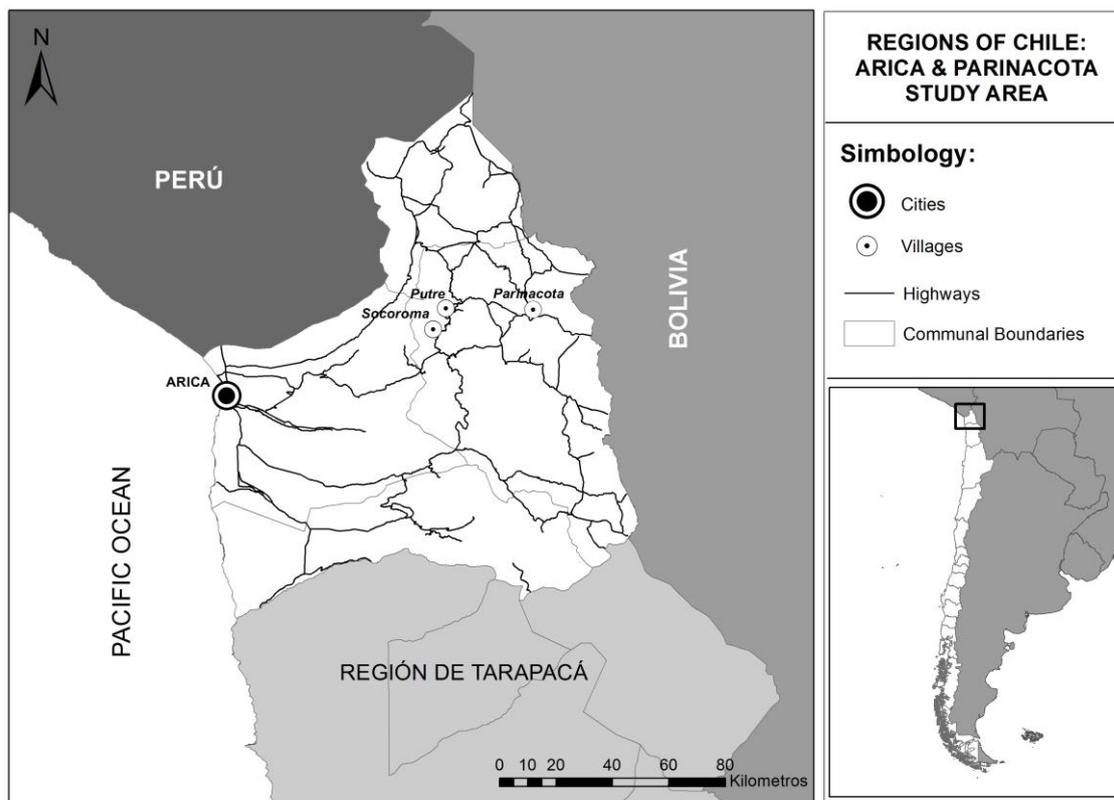
**Table 1.**

*Locations of study*

<b>Location</b>	<b>Toponymy</b>	<b>Altitude</b>	<b>Dominant Productive activity</b>	<b>Political-Administrative Belonging</b>
<b>1.Socoroma</b>	Lugar de la Yuca Blanca	3000 m	Agriculture	Region of Arica y Parinacota-Chile
<b>2.Putre</b>	Lugar donde murmulla el agua	3530 m	Agriculture, Cattle farming, Services.	Province of Parinacota-Chile
<b>3.Parinacota</b>	Lago de los Flamencos	4500 m	Ganadera-Turística.	Province of Parinacota-Chile

*Source: I.G.M, 2010*

The present article analyzes the data from one of these locations, the one known as Putre.



**Figure 1.**  
*Maps of “Putre”*

*Source: Elaborated by the author*

*B. Selection of the informants*

The sampling is intentionally based on two types of criterions: of opinion (thus, of strategy) and theoretical (according to the principle of maximum variance in the least amount of cases). In the first one, self-recognition as indigenous was considered; in the second one, the type of productive activities and the place of residence/daily location.

**Table 2.**  
*Sampling in the location of Putre*

Theoretical Criterions		Residence and location of activities	
		Housing in settlements	Isolated housing
Type of Activities	Agriculture, Shepherding	1	1
	Shepherding	1	1

According to the perspective of an ethnographic approach it was priority that criteria of informant selection allow deep understanding of the situations that characterize the

daily life of those who inhabit this place. In particular, it was of interest to recover the theoretical indications linking spatial experience that comes from work arrangements and its different expressions when it is associated with traditional activities of extensive land use.

For every individual of the sample, there was an in-depth investigation of 12 months.

### **Definition of the techniques of Recollection**

#### *A-Participant observation*

The investigator observed the main daily activities of the subjects. This made it possible to approach the phenomenon of informal education based on the constructions of space developed by each subject. This type of observation is the one that Ruiz (1999) calls Panoramic-Participant, that consists primarily of a profound observation “(...) living like an individual of that selected group” (p. 133). At the same time, “complete dedication to the task of interpretation” is required. “The observer makes himself part of the situation, so he can feel what it is like to live in that situation”. (p. 134).

**Table 3.**

*Key situations of investigation*

<b>Location of study</b>	<b>Subject of study</b>	<b>Key situations of investigation</b>
<b>Putre</b>	SF	Shepherding Collective cleaning of canals
	JCh	Shepherding San José mass in the Andes
	PV	Irrigation Easter Rites
	CG	Shepherding Easter Rites

*Source: Elaborated by the author*

These situations were defined as segments of the daily regime, by which the informants are construct a specific spatiality. According to approaches focused on understanding, it is necessary that the information gathering techniques are used in a specific context which allows the speaker to refer and argue from his experience.

These registers—of generic and key activities—were made in a notebook with anecdotal records in descriptive narrative of the observed-participative experience.

#### *B-In-depth interview*

After a participant observation, each subject was interviewed in depth. This was done through an unstructured in-depth interview. In words of Ruiz (Op. Cit.), the investigator tried to understand the individuals he interviewed based on their sincere and meaningful answers. At the same time, the investigator controlled the rhythm of the interviews in a non-authoritative manner, depending on the answers and the availability of the subject.

### **Definition of the technique of synthesis**

All processes of recollection of information lead to a phase of processing. Traditional quantitative designs normally explain this phase as essentially “analytical” (fragmentation of the results). In the present case, there is more of a “synthesizing” so as to maintain the meanings expressed by the informant subjects. So, the synthesizing technique used was that of NARRATIVE, in the context recommended by authors like Gudmundstottir (in McEwan and Egan, comp., 1998), who points out that narrative can be understood as a technique of investigation in which one can identify a series “(...) of verbal, symbolic or behavioral acts” (p.54). For their part, Bolívar, Domingo and Fernández (2001) point out that:

*“(...) narrative describes the structured quality of experience as an account; on the other hand, it gives the guidelines/ways of constructing meaning from personal temporary facts, through description and the analysis of data. Narrative is both a structure and a method to recap experiences” (p.17).*

In the case of informal education, narrative makes it possible to comprehend the investigative recount. In this sense,

*“(...) people, by their nature, lead recounted lives and tell the stories of those lives, while narrative investigators seek to describe lives, gather and tell stories about them, and write recounts of experiences”(Connely and Clandinin, 1995, p.12).*

As we already announced in previous paragraphs, narrative did not only turn out to be a technique useful for synthesizing registers of participant observation and in-depth interviews. This technique also made it possible to structure/produce a recount that described the results of this investigation:

*“(...) it is a special type of speech” (Bolívar, Domingo and Fernández, 2001, p.19) that implies “(...) a particular reconstruction of experience (from the sphere of action to the syntax of language), by which – through a process of reflection–meaning is given to what happened or was experienced” (Ibid, p.20).*

The meaning of the educational experience was reconstructed from a storyline with an axis centered on space. Frequently, the central concept of a storyline is time (Polkinghorne as cited by Bolívar, Domingo and Fernández, Op.Cit.). Based on Polkinghorne, there were at least three specific procedures:

- A. Identification of elements in disperses succession
- B. Establishment of criterions to select relevant events
- C. Establishment of a spatial order for those events

Then, the narrative was constructed with the presentation of findings and discussions of conclusions.

### **The subjective construction of spaces and the need to recover them for educational purposes**

Formal education doesn't acknowledge the inseparable link between the behavior of an individual and the essence of the interaction this same individual establishes with his surroundings. Educational activity has a spatial manifestation it often oppresses when the essential experience isn't included in the process of teaching-learning. Therefore, it is necessary to probe into all differentiating experiences of the subjects that cause crises and tensions inside the schoolroom. Unfortunately, the topics that refer to the complexity of the educational process are mostly tackled without looking at the whole scope of experience of the subjects. Educational literature looks only timidly at the problem of school and its incapacity to discern and give meaning to the subject who participates in the process. Dubet and Martucelli (1998) see school as a tool that is reproductive, productive and destructive of subjects:

*"School doesn't only produce grades and more or less certified levels of competence: it also produces individuals with certain attitudes and dispositions (...) school also has the power to destroy the subjects, to break them to categories of judgment that invalidate them (...)" (p. 11).*

From the point of view of these authors, the function of school has traditionally implied an abandonment of a private, particular world and access to universal culture, which in turn has caused an exacerbated dissonance between promoting autonomous subjects and integrating them to society. One doesn't go to school to construct experience, but to "occupy" a model of living established by society. These are not self-managed roles (Dubet and Martucelli, 1999). In this context, the behavior of these subjects - who are now actors - becomes relevant because they have to manage their experiences while trying to articulate their components in a way so as to achieve "work on themselves" (Dubet and Martucelli, 1994; 1998; 1999). Dubet and Martucelli (1998) make a diagnosis about school that is defying for those who attempt to understand the phenomenon of education. According to this diagnosis, school has lost its institutional character and function of reproduction-destruction because it has been unable to include the complex whole of students' experience. They point out that there is a "multiplicity of relations and spheres of action" (p.14), where the students construct their subjectivity. **With this, they acknowledge there is a constant series of experiences that go beyond school, which are difficult to incorporate to the experience of formal education.** The variance of subjects having educational experiences and of situations out of the school's control is so high that sometimes there is "the feeling that the pupils construct in parallel or against the school" (Ibid, p. 15). Faced with this problem, the authors propose an alternative. The experience (and specifically the function) of a school is no longer explained from the roles of those who participate in it, but rather from the way in which the subjects manage their own experience (Dubet and Martucelli, 1994). In this sense, they state:

*"The makings of actors and subjects doesn't arise harmoniously from the regulated functioning of an institution in which everyone plays a role. So, it is necessary to replace the notion of role for that of experience. Individuals are*

*no longer only formed in the learning of successive roles proposed to the students, but in their capacity to manage their successive school experiences" (Dubet and Martucelli, 1998, p. 14).*

Formal systems of teaching have omitted the complete and complex experience of individuals, and this has prevented the school to act like a space that potentiates the subjectivities and socialization of their students. Schools and formal institutions make less and less effort to get to know the experience of the "other" and increasingly try to annul differences through homogenization. One of the differential experiences the students bring to the classroom is that of space, that is to say, the one related to the influence of a system that is inseparable from meanings and outwards appearances. In different ways, the pupil manifests the impossibility to construct, in dialogue, his daily experience. The complex and essential scope of experience goes beyond the physical scene imposed by the school, beyond the social scene marked by formal teaching-learning and moreover, it goes beyond the interaction of human being-environment, as it is confined by the tangible margins of the gates or walls of the school. **When one attends to one of the manifestations of this range of experiences, one can better understand the educational processes. One of these manifestations is the geographical space, a term that has multiple meanings and is understood in the less classical way in this work.**<sup>2</sup>

Following this train of thought, it is interesting to point out some contributions by professor Tuan (1983) who places space - object-subject of geography - inside the sphere of experience:

*"Experience is constituted by feeling and thought. Human feeling isn't a succession of different feelings; more precisely, memory and intuition are capable of producing sensorial impacts in a changing flux of experiences, so, we could say there is a life of feeling, as there is a life of thought" (p. 11).*

Cognition (and/or action) appears as the concretion of human experience. These experiences are varying and have been understood only in their sentimental dimension, as if only feeling were an experience or as if it were possible to separate feeling from thought. But feelings and thoughts come together to form one single experience that has meaning only for me. All experience refers to the possibilities of humans beyond their animal configuration and it is constructed based on models of thought. Life is, then, an experience composed by at least two forms of matter that mostly coexist and manifest together. When a space is experienced as pleasurable it acquires, besides a distinctive character, the possibility to manifest with different levels of intensity depending on the degree of cognitive involvement (for example, on the level of perception) the human being has with his environment:

---

<sup>2</sup> Something like the least progressive paradigm in Chilean scientific geographic discourse.

*“Intimate experiences lay buried inside our most profound being, so we barely have the words to give them form, and we are mostly not even aware of them” (ibid, p.151).*

In this sense, intimacy depends in a way on the temporary pleasure felt by humans regarding their environment. While the experiences of place can be dynamic during a certain period, the configuration of a place is always stationary. Registering a detained moment of experience and codifying it in representation makes it possible characterizes the experience of that space as pleasurable:

*“Place is a pause in movement. Animals, including humans, rest in a certain location because it satisfies certain biological needs. Pause makes it possible for a location to become the center of a recognized value” (Ibid, p. 153).*

Space, as a particular and collective experience, reveals the essence of human being and makes it possible to understand the infinite possibilities humans have to relate beyond themselves on the level of affection, even creating new worlds in the sphere of imagination<sup>3</sup> that represent more or less finished projects of identities about being oneself and being us on the scale of values. Place is also the possibility of language, as affection develops based on codes and through channels of communication that make it possible to potentiate processes of identification and inter-subjectivity.

### **Putre: Murmurs that lull to sleep**

From a *saya*<sup>4</sup> on a plateau between rivers of the Andes – used as a passing point for travelers - Putre now seems to be more than the sounds of the waters that border and cross it. Today, this pre-Andean region is a meeting place and concentrates diverse cultural manifestations thanks to its political category. Putre is cosmopolitan; this change of identity has less to do with its condition of living space than the fact that it opened up to the world.<sup>5</sup>

### **The construction of a place called Putre**

We offer the reader quite a different way to look at the results of this investigation. We will do this reflecting about spatiality and education from the main situations that define our field of study: religious celebrations and associated productive activities. Though literature casts some light on the conditions in which these elements develop in the towns of the pre-Andean area and the *altiplano* (in terms of location, localization, dispositions, social and productive systems and cultural components) we cannot help but wonder if these descriptions truly reflect the characteristics that the Aymara recognize as their own.<sup>6</sup> Putre is permanently in tension between tradition as a

<sup>3</sup> This revitalizes the concept of “*Terrae Incognitae*” developed by John Wright (1947) that refers to the construction of ideal worlds, with as channeling axis, the development of imagination and criterion of esthetical judgment.

<sup>4</sup> Passing point, meeting place.

<sup>5</sup> From an important passing center of mining routes, Putre becomes important as an urban entity for the *altiplano*, concentrating large part of the activities of State and private services. The recent boost of tourism as economic policy from the center and the economic re-conversion generated by the destruction of productive systems of exchange make it into a tourist attraction, projected as a city very concerned with increasing its status in the economical dynamics of leisure.

<sup>6</sup> Not to forget that spatiality that, though it conditions, in general terms, the experience of the Aymara, it isn't completely incorporated to speech. It is very difficult for an Aymara who belongs to this city to inform about the complexity of the spatial

continuous history and tradition as breakup. Its condition of capital of the region and its privileged location among towns of the pre-Andean area make it the center of attraction for many immigrants who look for a place of production positioning, that is to say, a place of certain permanence though not in space and time, as pointed out by Massey (2012):

*“Space is, in this sense, intrinsically ingrained with time. Space is simultaneity of unfinished and ongoing trajectories. If time is the dimension of change, then space is the dimension of contemporary multiplicity. Also, there is a multiplicity of trajectories and processes, they are not static. Therefore, space is the dimension of the social element” (p. 205).*

As a settlement, it offers a way of life that is pretty different from the descriptions in books, at least with regard to their cultural matrix. However, this doesn't mean that there are no mythical (or at least magical) elements whatsoever in the acts and discourse of the inhabitants<sup>7</sup>. These characteristics are the ones that define a space in which “events” are possible, like the ones linked to the process of informal education. This idea can be seen already in the works of González (2001):

*“Today's point of view about the native communities in the Andes, specifically the Aymaras in the area of the Great North of Chile (Norte Grande), is commonly thought of as isolated communities... where modernity can cause a holocaust in the Andean people and culture as it arrives to the communities (...) this is not only a shelter for persons but also for the culture of the peoples who live there and so the logical conclusion is to avoid that they be affected in their cultural matrix and to preserve them as living peoples with an identity of their own” (p.1-2).*

This idea draws a first limit between that which has been declared as their own—defining a space from its essence - and that which is part of the specific experiences of time. In the first place and considering religious celebrations, there are two recounts that can illustrate this: one from the celebration of San José and another one from Easter Holy Week. There are substantial differences between these celebrations with regard to the amount of assistants and the rites. However, one can recognize characteristics of the process of production of space in both of them, and also of the education involved. As for the celebration of San José, it is interesting to point out that this ceremony isn't as popular as the other celebrations of mass religion and the profession of syncretic faith. It is associated to the liturgical calendar and ties families with the care of the church and the saint with protection of the family:

---

dimension in its worldview. At the same time, it is pertinent to state that the idea of education for life, in which the pachakuti represents the mobilizing force, is more present in the speeches of immigrants than in those who have lived in Putre for generations.

<sup>7</sup> The role of religious syncretism as structuring axis of a “way of being” and therefore “of inhabiting” remains important. More so, it is vital for the processes of informal education of the Aymara culture. An excellent example of this, is that a large amount of emigrants that have moved to Arica, come back for the big celebration (Easter and Cross of May) and makes the rites into mechanisms for socialization of Aymara languages and customs from parents who have formed a family far away from Putre to their children who try to build some degree of significance and identity with that spatiality.

---

*“A woman approaches the altar in the middle of the priest’s homily. She gets out a little bottle... she slowly empties it in a sort of brazier with a handle and a dense and nice smelling fume spreads on the altar... together with a young man, they are the only ones assisting to the mass. There is no singing or dancing, only an attitude of deep prayer” (Register of anecdotes, Recount 3).*

The scarce assistance to the celebration seems to indicate a general lack of interest for religious celebrations; however, long working hours and the great amount of other distractions for the habitants of Putre seem to be in detriment of the congregation. Many believers declare that even the absence of a priest causes the celebration to be different from what it used to be in other times:

*“not even five minutes have passed and she stands up again... this time she gets out a package of candles and places candles in front of all the saints in the temple... she sits down... and stands again to pick up the brazier... the smoke... the momentary disappearance of the priests... she does this again some four times... meanwhile, the other participant, the one I had met hours before as a tarquero is the last to join the celebration... at the end I realized the mass was a liturgy and the priests were probably only members of a religious order or seminarians... while she exited the temple Saturnina invites us to continue the celebration... it was the day before San José and the party was just beginning... the semi-priests, the tarquero friend and I”(Anecdotal register, Recount 4).*

However, there is another characteristic of this celebration that needs to be highlighted. Frequent assistants are often immigrants. In the above mentioned example, there is an immigrant woman from Bolivia, living in Putre, who maintains a cultural matrix based (as yet) on relations with her family at the other side of the frontier. With her, is an immigrant from the *mapuche* world who is making a permanent effort to recover, through different artistic expressions, that which defines the Aymara. In that sense, there emerges another scenario of frontier, the one that denies barriers and limits and relieves mobility and contact:

*“Migrations, then, aren’t the suspense about the effective location of the symbolic frontier but a laboratory of contingency, a context of creation of diversity... thinks at the frontier as contact and fabric of differences...” (Grimson, 2003, p. 17).*

It is then paradoxical to corroborate that the base of cultural permanence and resistance resides in people who declare themselves *putreño* but who are not recognized as such by the original peoples. In that sense it is interesting how elements of the matrix are so notoriously defined and connected with the experience of a *putreño*, beyond the limits of toponymy, or the limits of the State-Nation:

*“We went into the house of Saturnina, the woman who offered the incense at the celebration... there were many children... between the conversation and quite a strong drink (cocoroco 96° and warm milk) I realized that the seminarians were new at these celebrations...some minutes pass and Aymara*

*youngsters arrive to participate in the continuation of the Aymara mass... we sat in a circle, there were about a dozen of us... the woman handed out coca leaves and some sugar balls... we had to quickly make a bag with handkerchiefs and put the coca and the sweet balls in them... meanwhile the rite began... with the right hand one had to pass the bag counterclockwise after taking one or two coca leaves and putting them in the mouth... at the same time, one received the bag of the other neighbor and had to take out again one or two coca leaves... there were three turns (fifteen bags by two coca leaves)... some minutes later the turns ended and the bags crossed... the bag was passed on and the rite was repeated but now everyone did it randomly, without respecting the order... though I was desperate with this situation, at least the holy leaf freed me from altitude sickness... the ceremonial phase ends and Saturnina, who acted as administrator, straightens out a large tablecloth and a smaller one on top of it... on the latter, she throws out the remaining coca leaves and puts a bottle with a small glass in the center... the housewife takes the glass, fills it and goes outside of the house to offer it to Pachamama (Mother Earth)...then she returns to fill the glass and before drinking from it she sprinkles a little of it on the four corners of the smaller tablecloth... we must all do the same... to my surprise, the drink is piscola...the mass ends and it's time to dance... it is a kind of bailanta” (Anecdotal register, Recount 5).*

Spatiality of frontier that also struggles between the sacred and the profane and is sustained as informal educational content among immigrants<sup>8</sup>, especially Bolivians, though apparently it doesn't include the original inhabitants of the location. In this sense, the produced Andean space is a real and mysterious manifestation and is de-territorialized in its revelation:

*“Reflection about the sacred incorporates considerations about the profane. It is represented as completely different from the profane, that is, the first is related to a divinity, the second isn't. The manifestation of the sacred is indicated by the term of hierophany, which etymologically means the sacred that reveals itself. The sacred always manifests as a reality that is completely different to the reality of daily life. There are numerous hierophanies. The manifestation of the sacred in any object, a tree, a stone or a person implies something mysterious, bound to the reality that doesn't belong to our world...” (Rosendahl, 2002, p. 27).*

In this context, we could say that socio-cultural systems tend to manifest as configurators of experience for the subjects that glimpse the meanings that constitute it in religious rites. Space as hierophany and time as expression of manifestation of the sacred-profane restore the subject to its condition of unity with the cosmos and

---

<sup>8</sup> The one who activates the informal educational process about how to experience a space is precisely someone who intends to import spatiality.

---

community. So, in the rite itself, this space receives a new meaning and is constructed as an informal content seldom unveiled by the formal structures of education:

*“Like diversity, unity is intrinsic to human nature and mankind. It is implicit in the work that transforms men in a community and makes history into the product of their collective work on their means. So, every diverse human group spread out on the planet’s surface establishes the unity that makes it into a community” (Moreira, 2011, p. 86).*

However, the observations about this party are not necessarily indicative of the drawing power this type of rituals have among the Aymara. The conditions of this celebration appear to be different from those of Holy Week (Easter). One of the first rituals of the latter occurs Friday afternoon when the foremen and their families clothe their corresponding saints with native costumes (the saints are assigned for determined periods to the participants). In this way they prepare the figures that will accompany Jesus in the procession. Images of Saint John, Saint Mary and Mary Magdalene are prepared for the peregrination on devices called *andas*<sup>9</sup>, while the image of Jesus Christ is hung a few centimeters above the altar. While a ladder is placed to access the articulated image, the liturgy is initiated by lighting the so-called *semanario*, a structure that holds several candles at the same time. Candles go out as the liturgy advances with singing. When the church is darkened – when all the candles of the *semanario* have gone out – those who hold the figures are outside, ready to start the pilgrimage. The holy men who will carry Jesus in the main *anda* knock on the church door with a deafening noise<sup>10</sup> and when the administrator opens it, they come inside with other parishioners. They fill the temple with the noise of rattles and take down Jesus. The holy men are accompanied by the *sayones*<sup>11</sup> who carry Mary<sup>12</sup>, those who carry Saint John and Mary Magdalene<sup>13</sup> and a little girl held by one of the Verónicas:

*“Four stations awaited the pilgrim. The holy men and carriers of each one of the saints (I refer to the significance over the signifier because it is the way in which talk is formed and more so the act of talking) go ahead with forward movements, at moments seemingly standing still and then backward movements... it is very difficult to calculate when there is an advance but inside the church and like never before, the congregated families surround the ones favored with the privilege of carrying the dead deity and its followers. After they have walked along the streets close to the church, all through dawn, they return loaded with alcohol” (Anecdotal register, Recount 6).*

---

<sup>9</sup> Pilgrimage as a trajectory of meanings becomes an experience of spatiality-place that allows the common parishioner to get to know Jesus’s suffering. More intensely, suffering pilgrimage also emulates the torn up identity of the Aymara who returns to affirm himself as such.

<sup>10</sup> Though in the literature of popular religion this experience is explained by an analogy between darkness as the suffering of passion and from suffering as a connection with human suffering, a large part of the interviewed does not know that meaning and ventures into others like darkness as fear, or simply darkness as mourning. In all cases, religious spatiality is configured in place, as there is a permanent endowment of valuations and meanings even though it many times goes beyond the indications of those who have studied the cultural matrix.

<sup>11</sup> These are parishioners who are in line next to the holy men.

<sup>12</sup> They are commonly called Verónicas.

<sup>13</sup> Those who carry Mary Magdalene on Andas are Young women dressed in light colored clothes.

Many of those assisting have gone “up” from Arica to Putre especially for the occasion and a few have “gone down” from villages of the altiplano. These emigrants that return sporadically participate as a common assistant or an organizer, depending on their family relations and the socio-ecclesiastical role of the celebrations and patron saint. Many of them construct their identity based on these returns (something like adding religious-mystical experiences to their modern-urban experiences) and from there recognize themselves as *putreños*. One must not forget that according to this logic many of the children of emigrated *putreños* attempt to recompose an experience that, although they got to know it in abstract, is offered to them as a way to acquire a part of the meaning of being Aymara, specifically an Aymara of Putre. The analogy with the creation of middle landscapes as the result of an escapist behavior, as proposed by Tuan (2003), could be noteworthy. This, if one assumes that mystical-religious experiences are part of the sphere of the ideal and that modern-urban experiences are at the other end, that of reality.

What is the type of spatiality that can be made out in these religious celebrations? What socio-cultural keys are associated to the manifestation of religious belief and professing of faith? Is there some possibility, in this spatiality, to understand the way in which the processes of informal teaching-learning occur? The answers to these questions need an even more profound look so as to recover the whole of the experiences of “being *putreño*”, amplified to the socio-cultural and economic-political conditions that define the spatial conditions of the Andean world and education.

### **Spatiality: Lack of localization and Continuity**

When one attempts to deeply understand the spatial experience, there is always the risk of not attaining that task, because the challenge of re-articulating a reality (through an idea) implies the dense task of paying attention only to some of the relations the subjective world establishes with the objective world. It is always possible that space be the result of that synthesis, but it is always a restricted possibility, when the non-written *topos* is recovered from a speech that rejects reality. In words of Lowenthal (1998), if the past is a strange country, utopia tends to be even more so:

*“Since utopia comes from a leap towards another place, to no place, it develops the unsettling traits that are easily deciphered in their literary expressions: a tendency to submit the reality of dreams, fixation on perfectionist schemes, etc... flight towards the dream, the denial of the intermediate steps towards the idea” (Ricoeur, 2000, p. 215).*

Specifically, the space we intend to recover (or re-articulate) emerges from the recovery and recognition of profound relations of affection towards an environment (support/circumstances) and its relation with utopia. The experience of space as a place is what interests us more than anything, however and as we learn about the experiences of those who live in Putre, we see a process of continuous blurring of filial relationships, and a blurring of the feelings of belonging and identity that these individuals establish with their environment. A panorama emerges in which the media

and circumstantial conditions do not provide the basic goods the inhabitants need to construct a project for action (normally linked to the possibilities of internalizing the social aspect) nor even projects of subjectivation that would make them see themselves as activators of a space they perceive as their own, even if it concerns an utopia. A good entrance to glimpse some comprehensive principles is to be found in the modernity of Putre, in terms of the type of political, economic and cultural activities it has fostered since the Colony. Its location in the middle Andes has made it into a passing point for the inhabitants of the peoples of the lower Andes and the altiplano and also of valleys more to the south. As a destination for exchange and an administrative center, it is the focus of immigrations<sup>14</sup> by those who seek an entrance towards new forms of production. At the same time, activities of leisure have consolidated there, and thanks to the large amount of services it offers, this town has become a center of operations.

At the same time, there is a more or less internalized belief that the young generations of Putre<sup>15</sup> must look for new life experiences through formal education in urban centers of a higher hierarchy. Sometimes, migration is done without many precautions:

*“Before embarking on a risky endeavor, one needs to have information about the destination. What is the information at hand? The need to belief that there is a better world on the horizon—is that what predominates over the hard, known or distorted truth? Is it possible that the reality of the place of origin is so constrictive and unbearable that it ends up as the breeding ground of great desires and idealizations? And is it possible that these idealizations, for their simplicity and liveliness, appear as more real a dream than the familiar world?” (Tuan, 2003, p. 28).*

In these centers, they attempt to develop a life project while often facing some racist tendencies that are still deeply rooted in the Chilean population. Likewise, their precarious formal structures of teaching don't allow them to obtain the necessary knowledge to move on in new situations of formal teaching. Those who nonetheless manage to rise are unlikely to live in Putre again; at the most they will inhabit the “middle landscape”. They will probably remain connected through an “escapist nostalgia” that will allow them to escape from a culture they don't feel as their own, but that already penetrates them – even if unwittingly. The first escape (towards the city) generates the “false return” that makes it impossible to maintain the economic-productive matrix on which a large part of social relations rests.

Besides the tendency towards an experience of spatial “continuity” of established reality there is also quite a consolidated occurrence of returning emigrants who have failed to incorporate themselves in the dynamics of large urban centers. They return to Putre to be part of a socio-cultural dynamic they often feel foreign to. But this situation

---

<sup>14</sup> “The middle landscape also receives praise because it appears to be more real – closer to how life is or should be – than its opposite extremes, nature and city, that may come to seem unreal for contradictory reasons of insubstantiality and imperfection”. (Tuan, 2003, p. 49)

<sup>15</sup> It is at least interesting how this situation is shown palpably in rites, ceremonies and activities that are considered traditional for this locality. From simple recounts, profound observations can be deduced that show that spatiality is more connected with an experience of breakup that with a mythical expression of worldview.

isn't only limited to religious activities, as previously described, but also to activities more related to daily work. For instance, many of those who periodically return to take care of the abandoned family pasturelands are unable to obtain results with their work due to a sort of contextual rupture and oblivion. For example, there used to exist an experience of (spatial) content for the good use and management of the pre-Andean soil with irrigation through the canalization of waters perpendicular to the slope. This experience becomes diffuse and difficult to transmit. The older generations, Bolivian immigrants and people of smaller villages still maintain that experience transformed in content as a "knowledge in use" while they intend to transmit it unsuccessfully as informal teaching, perhaps because they are backed by projects for native-rural development that deny that knowledge and intends to impose new production technologies to the ethnic minorities.<sup>16</sup>

These same considerations apply to shepherding, as very few *putreño* children are dedicated to fortify their collective socialization through this activity, undoubtedly one of the most traditional of Putre:<sup>17</sup>

*"Here we change the lamas (...) apart from changing, we give them water; we have to untangle them because sometimes there are foxes that come to bother them."*

*"Aha."*

*"Then they get tangled up, they turn around" (Pu.E.1.52, Pu.E.1.56).*

Shepherding includes new spatial contents that turns into practical knowledge put out unintentionally for the apprentices when shepherds share those practices. The movements and defined routes depend on considerations of use and intensity in pasturelands; these are often only given in tenancy and not owned by the shepherds themselves. The lands that aren't used for shepherding or agriculture by *putreño* owners or immigrants (who are beginning to "be" Putre) begin a slow process of degradation, well known for its lack of control and management<sup>18</sup>. The knowledge in use is a manifestation of the cognition of space that has normally involved perceptive and especially representative processes. The mobilization of meanings used for "knowledge" doesn't put an end to spatial practice. The latter is formed when this knowledge is mobilized to solve a problematic situation (to resolve a tension in the objective/subjective, resolve a situation of affectation, the escalating of some phenomenon, or when there is an attitude that leads to moral valuing):

---

<sup>16</sup> INDAP-CHILE (Instituto de Desarrollo Agropecuario-Institute for Agriculture and Livestock Development) has no small amount of initiatives to finance projects of irrigation by dripping and dripping by sprinkling, negating atmospheric and morphological variables that make the middle mountain a place of differentiated meanings.

<sup>17</sup> This is an indication that much of the "traditional" knowledge in use doesn't have potential receptors and that many of the bases of informal education like the idea that "the definition of educational objectives depends on the priorities dictated by the situation itself..." (Saviani, 1980, p. 43) are unknown even in the social relations developed by a people that apparently develops processes of endoculturation about "tradition".

<sup>18</sup> Evidence of lineal erosion are common in irrigation channels and gullies. Indicative of the destruction of a knowledge associated to sustainable production. Pachakuti is impossible when the notion of "pacha" ceases to be a personal and collective experience.

---

*“Eh! A little, only about a month (...) Before I came to shepherding, now a month ago, there was a first... my mom wasn't home, she was in Arica and then I went and Saúl found me, and he told me he would take me shepherding, then the first day I went home, and then he sent me to work over there” (Pu.E.2.20, Pu.E.2.22).*

The role of family is still vital to find the historical origin of a group of productive activities that are identified with daily life. The described spatial knowledge is always disposed for itself. It doesn't work as a different essentiality, because the content's project never includes acquiring a variant condition of the subject. Content is realized in the subject by activation:

*“Cold makes the plants dry up, grass and animals have to go up the mountain, they go that way (...) Yes, those are used and the animals don't eat, they have plagues, they also have plagues (...) It isn't that – they do eat! But what they eat doesn't have taste of green grass. They eat but not with pleasure. (...) They leave the branches like this, but when it's green they eat everything. They enjoy it (...) In January, February, in those times of rain people don't irrigate as much because water is falling, (...) and it gathers” (Pu.E.2.192, Pu.E.2.194, Pu.E.2.196, Pu.E.2.198).*

Additionally, the temporal character of the productive processes is intimately associated to cognition of a space in which the cumulus of experience shows a place and time characterized by permanence. This knowledge is mobilized through spatial practices. The inhabitants of Putre do not question the spatiality that is constructed daily and that has a configuration that can only be understood by the arrival of returned emigrants, of people from villages nearby, public servants and tourist agents. In this encounter, experiences combine, and spatiality is produced in which it is difficult to determine identifications for those who call themselves “putreños”.

*“Space becomes smooth and fluid. Mobility and the understanding of space eliminate barriers, and space is redesigned organized in netting” (Moreira, 2011, p. 97).*

Spatial contents are constructed as a possibility and through informal education. This investigator has felt challenged more than once by a lesson, though it isn't possible to have experienced it previously in today's Andean reality.

A very small number of children practice shepherding in Putre. Formal schooling takes up a large amount of time and many putreño children have already migrated to a larger city. Given this situation, it is unlikely for them to feel that shepherding is a way of realization and materialization of their project of subject-actor. Moreover, there are no apparent possibilities for shepherding to be a space for learning. Shepherding is seen as a temporary activity, consolidation of an accepted “permanence” of a confusing spatial basis, constructed on opposed meanings with, oftentimes, contradictory intentions.

In this scenario the pupil invited to the spatial experience receives contradictory and complex messages that do not aim towards a collective project, that do not even aim to

projects of constitution of self. The inhabitants of Putre don't see themselves as participating of spatiality "in which they constitute themselves as worthy subjects". In that sense, demonstration becomes a learning mechanism of spatiality, proposed without much questioning by those who teach:

*"Yes, now look at how everything looks when it's dry"*

*"Everything dry"*

*"It hasn't rained. It wasn't like this before, it used to rain from December to March, weather has changed a lot now. (...) No, now it rains a little, last year there were torrential rains, destroyed the bridges there. Took everything, the highway and railway (...) when it's going to rain, the clouds come from the sea (...) From the sea, so when temperature rises it evaporates the sea and then the clouds come up here (...) the rains begin"* (Pu.E.3.62, Pu.E.3.64, Pu.E.3.66).

Learning by demonstration is always present in comparative relations. The use of analogies is a permanent invitation of those who teach to participate. Here spatiality offers an enabling environment that puts this education in perspective.

### **Place moment and dual identity**

The experience of place-moment forms spatiality at a transitional level of valuation that the subjects can potentially establish with their surroundings. Putre is a clear example of the breakup of the emphasis on location. Its inhabitants are less and less capable to locate that space because they have a cumulus of experiences with their environment throughout time. Among other things, with being there, distance is lost, "we only become aware of our connection with the place when, once we abandon it, and we can see it from a distance (Tuan, 1980, p.225).

If we look at <sup>19</sup> the reasons the inhabitants themselves give for their lack of interest in continuing to develop traditional activities, we can see that they reinforce the idea that these have no possibility of future projection. Some religious manifestations are the way to maintain a sense of collectivity. However, participation in those religious manifestations is relative, as people get involved in them sporadically and only during specific rites. Living in Putre and being Aymara appears as too difficult an imposition to configure identity from a sense of "we". In discourses (informal talking and official speeches) the idea prevails that the private "I" is priority, because it gives the individual a permanent possibility to become subject if he aligns his priorities to the conditions offered by the different institutions (government, non-government, public and private):

---

<sup>19</sup> It is important to point out the word game used by Paul Watzlawick and Peter Krieg (1995) to describe the action of observing: "We scientists make science like observers that explain what they observe. Like observers we are human beings. We human beings find ourselves as observers of observation when we start to observe our observation in our attempt to describe and explain what we do. That means that we already discover ourselves in language making distinctions in language when we start to think in language about what we do and how we do what we do when we operate as animals endowed with language. In other words, it happens to us that we are already living systems endowed with language doing what we do (including our explanation), when we start to explain what we do, and that we are already in the experience of observation when we start to observe our observation. Observing is what we observers do when we distinguish language in the different types of entities we produce as objects of our descriptions, explanations and reflections..." (p.158)

“Actors are more or less forced to give priority to their private “I”, sometimes recurring to primary identities like gender or ethnicity” (Dubet and Martucelli, 1999, p.288).

An example of this is the large amount of conflicts about the resources that are assigned through policies for indigenous-spatial focalization. These policies cause the breakup of collective alliances and generate new conjunct demands aimed at satisfying individual projects. The potato harvest, religious rituals and collective cleanings for irrigation are presented as indicative of the permanent ripping up of the subjects. With great effort, they manage to develop a dual model of identification, where identity becomes unstable and where the private “I” is privileged over the collective “I” (a possible “expected” by others). They recur to their indigenous identity without necessarily assuming themselves as “eclectic” subjects in political, cultural and economic matters. In the rituals of food production there are scarce remains of being Aymara:

*“Potatoes are pulled out in straws when it is pretty cold, in daytime ice doesn’t melt and there can be ice all day. Like I’m telling you, it doesn’t melt, there is ice all day. It doesn’t melt, it melts in the sun but sometimes not even sun melts it, it is quite cold in June, July”*

*“Aha”*

*“Then we take the opportunity to make chuño (potato starch), potato chuño that is how they call it”*

*“It’s called potato chuño”*

*“(…) at nights we pour water on it. (…)That is also how my father did it (…) because chuño doesn’t spoil, here it can last years and years”*

*“Years”*

*“Yes years and it doesn’t spoil, it’s the same as canned”*

*“Ah!”*

*“You steep it and cook it. Just like with potatoes, of course it is blacker in color, but just as tasty; at least it fills up your belly”*

*“The important thing is that it fills your belly”*

*“Of course. The people who used to work here were given chuño and that is what filled their stomach. They had to work from sunrise to sundown”.  
(Pu.E.3.108, Pu.E.3.112).*

The main actors of teaching manifest themselves when they work in collaboration. However, there isn’t too much interest in incorporating the environment for learning procedures and techniques associated to the productive tasks that are typical of this location. The rhythms in which spatial experience happens are largely reflected in the behaviors of the informants. Much of daily life has become technique and apparently it is even seems to describe the productive system as routine:

*(About the terraces)*

*“No, they are sown”*

*“Ah, they are sown”*

*“I mean these ones”*

*“Ah, the ones those are here. And who makes these dry-stone walls, these stones?” “We do”*

*“You”*

*“Sure. (...)... years ago to cultivate stones (...) From that same place, you get them from the place. For example, there are some stones there, we select them and you throw the pebble to the side of...”. (Pu.E.3.132, Pu.E.3.134, Pu.E.3.136, Pu.E.3.138).*

There is a relative frailty in spatial experience, as they are permanently confronted to the logics of the structuration of the social field, which is especially reflected in the more or less imposed forms of relating with the environment. In the construction of identity, strategic logic seems to be dominating actions, as identities are frequently included in more extended concepts, normally through the defense of particular features that define them, with more insecure ways of integration and less rooted roles. Many of the personalities described through productive activities indicate a subjective adhesion to social expectations that have been learned through informal education. It is convenient to exemplify these affirmations with the answers given to the question about identity:

*(About Aymara identity)*

*“...Yes I am Aymara (...) Because my mom comes from a place where there are only savages...”. (Pu.E.1.204, Pu.E.1.206)*

*(About Aymara identity)*

*“Yes (...) because I like to talk in Aymara. If I speak Aymara, I am Aymara”*

*“(...) talking about why to speak Aymara”*

*“When people come from abroad, they like for us to speak this way of Aymara, that is why I like it”. (Pu.E.2.264, Pu.E.2.266, Pu.E.2.272)*

*(About Aymara identity)*

*“Well, I have to say I am, because we are considered to be aymara”*

*“Ah, okay, okay!”*

*“We are considered Aymara because all the people who live here are considered Aymara”*

*“You are considered Aymara”*

*“like the others from Atacama, the others are Easter Islanders”*

*“Sure”*

*“We have also had meetings with the Easter Islanders over there”*

*“Yes”*

*“With all the ethnic groups”*

*“With all the ethnic groups”*

*“Yes...” (Pu.E.3.282).*

The matrix is questioned when one assumes that “a certain way of being an Aymara” doesn’t belong to pure sacredness. Parts of the models of identification of those who live Aymara spatiality are constructed according to the logic of integration. In that sense

and as pointed out by Dubet and Martucelli (1999) “Ethnicity has two faces... it operates as a personal refuge and as a way to protect the culture of origin...” (p. 277)

### **Configuration of the Educational Process**

The spatial experience of Putre presents the typical features of high modernity that questions the systems of traditional production. Putre as a spatiality of currents is defined as a center of exchange and a transit point. In this context, productivity is linked to the development of agriculture with Andean technology and the development of cattle - mainly composed by sheep and goats. Many of the genres of life are associated to a (sacred) rituality that is understood from those founding productive systems or from their associated links. Continuous de-socialization and the frequent denial of traditions for production allow for the definitive erosion of economic systems. The deterioration of the basic supplies needed for productive activities is a good example of this:

*“My mother has grasslands over there, down there. Sheep eat away and there is no more grass and they have to be moved somewhere else, so we have to go to different places”*

*“Aha”*

*“For example, we used to be in Marcapampa, then we went there (points with his index) and now from there we are going down to Chuscuma.(...)Yes, we stayed longer there because there are more grasslands, here we have only two. Two grasslands, three with one down there, with this one four and another one where we leave the animals; also the mares and there are also grasslands up there. There my mother lets them graze in each one of them and after she is finished, she goes down, then when it grows, they irrigate it and my mother comes back up here and so on” (Pu.E.1.114, Pu.E.1.116).*

Undoubtedly, this is an indication of the disuse of grasslands. Many of the fields used for farming or cattle-raising are sub-used without any chance to be run by the families who own them, as there isn't much workforce to develop traditional activities with a minimum of modifications. The inhabitants who return to Putre, or those who simply stay, are faced with the double option of maintaining the cumulus of knowledge or simply incorporating new knowledge that would make it possible to maintain these types of activities in the pre-Andes. When they join the socio-economic dynamics they normally do it renouncing largely to the structure of knowledge that sustain their original, elemental spatiality and therefore it isn't easy for them to agree to the preeminence of models typical of “being *putreño*”.

*(About the absence of the rest of the family)*

*“He spends most of the time at home, he doesn't want the fields, he doesn't come...”*

*“And do you plan to teach this to someone later on, to your children?”*

*“Yes (...) No, I can't force them” (Pu.E.1.150, Pu.E.1.152).*

Migration hinders the generation of places of “interaction between those who teach and those who learn”; moreover, there is no possibility for some content to intercede<sup>20</sup> between them that would be meaningful for both. One of them would be forced to transform his knowledge, acquiring new ways to enunciate, denominate, comprehend and explain his circumstances and conditions of support. For example, the individual who returns occupies a field that has already suffered erosion (from weathering, transport and sedimentation), his irrigation tools have been abandoned and their re-activation is only possible if knowledge has been transmitted in the past and the individual still remembers it (it is important to point out that significant learning and pertinent teachings are normally associated to a situation where individuals have the possibility to take their knowledge into the subjective realm and socialize for the conformation of a self that belongs to a particular identity):

*“...No, they are there, of course, some are abandoned (terraces), but most of them have alfalfa (lucerne) fields, terraces that have alfalfa”*

*“Aha”*

*“They are irrigated”*

*“Ah okay they are irrigated!”*

*“Yes, they are irrigated. (...)Some on terraces, some on furrows”*

*“Aha”*

*“... and others on trays as they call them (...) They are shaped as trays”*

*“Ah, like trays. Okay!”*

*“...and there they just fill them, water them and from pools”*

*“Ah!”*

*“...and it's no problem, when it's filled you just close the water”*

*“Ah!”*

*“Yes but not like this one on the plateau. You open the water and you have to see that the water reaches it but leveled, you can't just pour water everywhere, you have to bring water but in a way that everything is irrigated” (Pu.E.4.144, Pu.E.4.148, Pu.E.4.150).*

A good example is the distribution of focalized supplies among the indigenous population; this leads to the existence of some groups that hinder the collective maintenance of knowledge of productive structures and even, as we have already seen, the knowledge of religious rites. Many of these funds have even encountered the most deeply rooted knowledge of Andean society, that include making the most of agricultural resources so as not to endanger their use by the new generations. In this context, children learn a spatiality that is different from that of classic anthropological manuals and many times teaching is also influenced by these types of knowledge that become the context for action. There are many examples of how even institutionalism has played an essential role in the conformation of a space, as it decides what type of technology to finance and many of the inhabitants of Putre do not question the structure

---

<sup>20</sup> The principle that content acts like one of the three axes that structure that field of didactic action (triangular model) is at least tensioned, more so when the sphere of observed experiences proposes an experience that is more similar to the fractal model (it has to be pointed out that in both cases the models are always reductions of the experiential educational field).

---

of associated knowledge. This allows the entrance of new forms of thought about the use of natural resources in the pre-Andes. In that case, there is no questioning of the hybrid spatiality that comes up:

*“Irrigating now”*

*“Irrigating”*

*“Yes. (...)Of course this was more irrigated before; we had to level out the canal we had to break it so the water would flow out everywhere. Now with my (...) cattle (...) we had to level it out”*

*“Ah!”*

*“Well with my pall we leveled out the canal so the water would flow out evenly.” “Ah, okay!”*

*“This is the irrigation system called lying down irrigation. There is another irrigation system now, which is irrigation by dripping”*

*“by dripping, of course”*

*“and the other one is irrigation by pressure. (...)We know that our properties are prepared for that type of irrigation, For that type of irrigation”. (Pu.E.3.12, Pu.E.3.14, Pu.E.3.16)*

It isn't common to see resistance to the “idea of progress” Putre locals have – these locals being both natives from the village and those who have arrived from other towns in search of better opportunities. They assume that progress is continuous and lineal and includes the coexistence of diverse technologies, many of which are founded on systems of contradictory beliefs and even on irrelevant knowledge. This is a spatial reality located historically about the time of the establishment of the frontier:

*“It is always convenient to point out that the dismemberment of the pure elements of a cultural group aren't a rarity or “an exception to the rule”. The breakup of cultural elements, more so the breakup of characteristics of identity, has a historical outline in which one of the initial points is defined by the process of national integration” (Van Kessel, 1992b, p. 312).*

The experience of spatiality that renounces to acts of resistance often causes the inhabitant (and even the investigator) to feel part of a vague project of “being” approached, but it is from primary identity that this spatiality is able to attain a better management of his own subjectivity. This is more so if we consider the growing emigration that has caused generations of youngsters to move to the regional capital of Arica in search of a better “future” with better conditions for work and study. The families of Putre constitute the first spatiality of learning (and therefore the first spatiality to be treated as content), however this reality is questioned as a dynamic factor of knowledge aimed at the configuration of a “being from there”:

*“Yes! There are very few putreña families. (...)Of course, on one hand because the generations have grown older and the children have emigrated,”*

*“Of course,”*

*“The fields are in hands of people who let them. And they don't always know how to do it... (...)They do it but not in the same way”*

*“Of course,”*

*“The old ways change. People don’t know how to do it anymore. (...) Many things my parents did I don’t do, as I told you before we are trying to find easier ways,”*

*“Of course,”*

*“For example, my parents worked in (...) Of course, we don’t do it because it is too difficult to work in that system,”*

*“Of course,”*

*“You have to know how to manage the water”. (Pu.E.4.261, Pu.E.4.263, Pu.E.4.265, Pu.E.4.267, Pu.E.4.269)*

Family is the first collective space and its dynamism is associated to the intentionality of community development. So, in the permanent scenario of dismemberment by continuous migrations it’s difficult to project the configuration of an interrelated scenario in which the subjects acknowledge themselves as part of a whole. The knowledge in use associated to the experience of spatiality (trajectories, routes, migrations, valuing, morphologies) are presented, for example, in shepherding, an activity that continues to exist in a precarious stability.

Shepherds do not do their work for the direct benefit of their families nor is what they earn enough as a primary income. Normally, they earn a minimal part of the value produced with their work and the rest belongs to those who collect the rent. This permanently challenges the economies of subsistence. The permanence of the crisis is talked about lightly, and it’s almost as if they accept it naturally. A sort of socialized despair that is known as a representation, linked to a knowledge that is less and less shared and part of a project of subject. Knowledge is spread out for a socio-spatial activity, but in no way does it structure a subjectification of what is socially acceptable. Many of these situations are anchored to recounts of migrations that mark the way in which social incorporation is perceived. The role of family discourse is transcendental, as it becomes the primary source for the permanence of the crisis and for the reproduction of a model of identity that breaks up with the relations of production based on solidarity and complementarity<sup>21</sup>, and therefore, that breaks up with a certain type of social relations that are part of the symbolic-cultural frame.

The projection of spatial experience towards the symbolic-cultural dimension is effectively to be seen in the transformations of rituals. One of the most significant experiences has to do with the celebrations<sup>22</sup> of Easter Holy Week. There is a large celebration in the central temple, in the presence of many parishioners. Many emigrants who maintain houses, property and family ties in Putre come back to accompany the suffering Christ who will die at the cross. Depending on their family tie the assistants

---

<sup>21</sup> Evidence about this system of complementarity exist, for the case of the Aymara, from before the arrival of the Incas (Bermúdez, 1963, Núñez, 1972, Cuneo Vidal, 1914 cited by Juan Van Kessel, 1992, p.104)

<sup>22</sup> In the logic of the cycle of natural order, Easter celebrations represent the cult to cosmic death and its temporality intersects with the celebrations of Cruz de Mayo (Cross of May), typical of agricultural ayllus. The logic of death has also been situated in the geo-mathematical transit given by autumn-winter. This purist relation is a sophisticated knowledge without presence in the formal language of subjects; it is constituted as a completed knowledge from an interpretation about a matrix that permanently becomes blurred.

---

take on the tasks of majordomo, who belong to the founding-original families of the village:

*(Cruz, Cross)*

*"It comes out, you know Mrs. Sabina, yes, yes, yes. You go up there,"*

*"Aha"*

*"Then they take a turn at the police headquarters, and then they go down again, where the house of doña Zulema is, you know it?"*

*"Yes, yes"*

*"There it stops and it stops at the next corner, they go straight forward until they arrive, do you know Mr. Carlos Zarzuri?"*

*"Zarzuri, ah! Yes, yes, yes"*

*"Do you know his house?"*

*"Yes, yes, yes"*

*"It arrives there. Then we go up until La Paloma"*

*"Aha"*

*"After La Paloma they go to Mrs. Sabina's"*

*"Ah, okay!"*

*"Then they go inside the church, go into la Amanecida (...) Sometimes we take turns with the children" (Pu.E.2.292 Pu.E.2.294).*

La Cruz (The Cross)<sup>23</sup> becomes a visible materialization of a past remembered (May) and it is always possible that it will become a spatiality-place. However, for a large number of *putreños*, this spatiality has been based on the persistence of beliefs that are only enacted in times of celebration. La Cruz de Mayo (The Cross of May) is part of a larger calendar that seems not to exist if one looks at the amount of people who are present at minor festivities and daily liturgical celebrations. With less force than other towns from the pre-Andes, La Cruz has meaning for the *putreños* (and here we don't refer exclusively to the original indigenous inhabitants of Putre). Around it and based on it, they share beliefs, modify knowledge and generate new structures and shared fields of understanding, which prevents them from feeling identified with a determined pure spatiality. Immigration strengthens this mix of symbolic aspects and interpretations of visual elements in communication. Immigration strengthens the generation of a more dynamic spatiality that is more complex in terms of enabling and boosting univocal identifying models. This immigration has a spatial logic that doesn't only express itself in religious rites. It is also expressed in some traditional rites like the cleaning of canals:

*"...I have a daughter here, Carmen, who wants to go to Vicuña, and the other one is now at school, and they used to help me shepherding, but not now. Now there aren't any people to shepherd"*

*"Ah, there aren't!"*

<sup>23</sup> As we already said regarding the celebration of the Cross of May, it is associated to the most classic rites present in the profession of catholic faith in Easter Week. However, and despite being part of the cult of death, the Cross of May reflects the visuals and sonority of life and the esthetics of rebirth. The best evidence of this, are the colors with which it is decorated and the type of singing that goes with it. It is important to point out that the music that goes with it has a different synthetic structure from the one that accompanies the mortuary rite of Holy Week. While the native socoromeños acknowledge this difference, *putreños* don't make a difference between the two.

*“No, and what we have left of cattle isn’t enough to pay them, you have to pay them social security, their salaries”*

*“It’s difficult”*

*“Difficult and I don’t believe (...) it is enough to come here” (Pu.E.3.98).*

The cleaning of canals<sup>24</sup> becomes a collective celebration that is tested at all moments, as their rituals firmly question the logic of private property in the economy of rural markets. It attempts to give “normality” to the technological structure that accompanies productive processes and therefore the inhabitants try to recuperate and make the most of this asset that is primordial for the development of agriculture (and we suppose it is a sacred backbone of the life of peoples who recognize their identity as indigenous):

*“Collective cleaning of canals, of course, they are done twice a year,”*

*“Okay”*

*“after the rains and I think after that they do them in August, September, twice a year we clean the canals (...) As always, if there is a problem with the people they won’t clean your canals and depending on the delegate, the one in charge of the water gives them another job or fines them, or if they don’t pay they don’t receive water for their plants” (Pu.E.4.195 Pu.E.4.197).*

Irrigation and collective activities begin to change because of a spatiality imposed by a system of bigger exchange and unequal distribution. In that sense, water and soil become scarce goods and their property a priority to participate in a larger process of production:

*(Is there any problem with irrigation?)*

*“Sure... that one is irrigating there, there we divide up the water in three parts. And there he takes out more water, and that is where he is detrimental to me”*

*“Ah, of course!”*

*“I have to go right away, you see, it’s drying up over there (...)Yes”*

*“Ah!”*

*“They can also suddenly interrupt the canal”*

*“They interrupt it”*

*“No, sand comes and the canal gets interrupted and so it’s more difficult for us” “How complicated!”*

*“Yes, (...) That is what life in Putre is like” (Pu.E.3.166, Pu.E.3.168, Pu.E.3.170).*

From an event that involves the community in collective work, it frequently turns into a place of dispute for the access and use of water. There are several works that show the permanence of that activity in rural Andean systems, however in Putre the permanence of this process is normally associated to the participation of a few who

---

<sup>24</sup> Normally the cleaning of Canals is a celebration that lasts between 7 and 8 days and starts with the sacred rite or “huaqui” officiated by the majordomos and the purikamamas (ancient women, an hereditary title) and that for the present case are very difficult to identify.

---

intend to reverse the systematic oblivion of this type of initiatives that “constitute them differentiated as Andean subjects”:

*“Do you share with the people of the canals?”*

*“No, hardly. Of course that is the only part. For example I only let my cattle graze. We don’t mingle our cattle with someone else, except with family, for example, here I have the goats of Doña Eloisa, and I have the goat of Rut, so only with family, not with people from the village” (Pu.E.4.199 Pu.E.4.201).*

The individual who returns does so with a new knowledge, not necessarily a less legitimate knowledge. It strengthens an idea of the world that can distance him from what has been defined as the foundation of being “putreño”<sup>25</sup>. It is interesting to see how the maintenance of productive activities and the whole associated social and ritual sphere is done in detriment of a strategic logic where subjects are normally linked to decisions that appear to be contradictory. They organize themselves as natives, but differentiate themselves in their political adherence. They reaffirm themselves in syncretic catholic religion but move on to new protestant confessions. In each of their strategic actions the role of the displaced – both those who migrated from other places as those who returned – has a strong influence in the making of “a new” being there, that could deny their primary identity (related to their recognition as members of an indigenous people). Constant migration seems to influence the construction of a mixed identity that causes dismemberment because of the permanent feeling of not belonging here or there:

*“...Well some, there is no work for them, they go to school and leave. Most putreños are all somewhere else”*

*“They left”*

*“The Mollo family is one of the main families here. The children all left, one is in Peru and the other one in Santiago. They work at the chancellery. (...)And so there are putreños... there are only a few putreños here...”. (Pu.E.3.56 Pu.E.3.58)*

We can also presuppose that the individuals who come for different reasons to Putre, have different socio-linguistic variances that define multiple spatialities, even for “a people” that has been defined as a unity. This unity is under permanent tension by that cosmopolitan placeless essence, unknown as the great scenario in which educational processes occur.

## Final words

---

<sup>25</sup> Assimilationist conscience belongs to a multicultural discourse and is often “justifying of discriminative behavior” (Hernández, 2003) which for the present case manifests through policies of health inspection. This conscience is more evident in Putre but there are certainly some traces of it in Socoroma and Parinacota.

Leveling, cancellation and death of the other<sup>26</sup>, as well as the disrespect for the difference are circumstances that characterize national education systems. Formal education is determined to deny the historical, economic, political, cultural “other” as soon as this appears as a variance which is impossible to manage. Specifically, the spatial “other” and all its manifestations, is also denied by the formal educational practices. In this context relieving the ethnic manifestation of the spatial "other" is an act of recognition that should be the basis of practices of pedagogical intervention. Geographical education in this regard, encourages a scenario of encounter if it is able to offer possibilities of subjectivity and socialization to subjects which converge in a teaching-learning situation. In this same sense, it is priority that pedagogical interventions recognize the other and its context of existence as a legitimate condition, as well as the produced and lived space as a first input for project a scheduled teaching action. In this sense, legitimacy operates as tacit and mutual acceptance and recognition, for example, of the subjective experience as basis of the lived space. In a complementary manner, geographical education should assume that the experience of otherness defines spatial identities, establishes codes of speaking and builds dwelling for the subject.

There is no unique legitimate knowledge with the intrinsic value of imposing itself and discarding other knowledge. This seems to be a fairly accepted premise when thinking about geographical education. Based on the principle of sociocultural recognition (which is also a principle of justice) it is critical to relieve the variance and the relativity of the matter which is mediated by educational processes. The actors in these processes mobilize unequal resources, thereby defeating the knowledge made experience by the legitimized knowledge, validated as necessary and relevant.

The inhabitants of El Lugar donde murmulan las aguas (the place where waters murmur) assume that everyone can know that which is open to affection (sensations), senses (perception) and meanings (representation). However the acts of cognition doesn't always culminate in knowledge for the self, less so in knowledge for use. The strategies used differ as knowledge is aimed at an objective; that is to say, it becomes an action (some could even consider that the process of knowing doesn't end until one mobilizes that which is believed to be “known” in situations of daily life). If the objective is to incorporate the pupil to a certain way of being in space and by space, teaching strategies that privilege the contact with objects are normally used through the use of procedures or heuristics based on demonstrative-comparative propositions (they boost sensitive and perceptive cognition) and analogic-metaphorical (they boost representative cognition).

So, Andean subjects relate to their environment in a varied and diversified way, though they are forming a “declared socio-linguistic Aymara unity”. These are differentiated relations that go beyond the political frontier and configure space. At the

---

<sup>26</sup> Although it is not of interest to discuss this in depth, it is worth to highlight an idea developed by Taylor (1993) which inspired this perspective. He notes that the recognition of others by politics "(...) becomes compelling because of alleged links between recognition and identity (...) our identity is shaped in part by the recognition or the lack of it "(p. 43)

---

same time, they give spatiality to the condition of being. That space – or the condition of spatiality – makes in turn certain educational experiences possible, as it gives the one teaching the proper circumstances to generate specific and localized learning. Geographical education in general and the teaching of geography in particular should build bridges to connect the objectual field of our discipline -defined as a set of relationships that humans keep and reproduce with the environment - to the world of these experiences, so that the ultimate goals of any educational intervention is precisely to live and re-build their own worlds.

Putre is an Andean space experienced as a place-moment, where the breakup of productive relations is a distinctive characteristic. This breakup is consequence of the dismantling of the system of technological beliefs and the absence of “educational transactions” that guarantee the transmission of knowledge to future generations. This annuls the possibilities of social encounter and the type of subject is a returned emigrant or a passing-through immigrant. In those cases, there is an effort to at least remain in an experience of being Aymara, a specific way of being *putreño*. The type of identity favored by informal education is dual in character, where actors are more or less focused to prioritizing their private “I”. Therefore, the *putreño* frequently learns to move in different registers through a logic of strategic acting that in turn boosts particular ways of producing-signifying the place of one own.

The loss of attachment, the cognitive dissonance, the weakening of affection which sustains the human-environment relationship in the school world, are evidence of an inexistent incorporation of this knowledge and experience in educational planning processes. In particular, the danger of being part of planning or of education that reproduces poor levels of affective relationship with the environment that supports and surrounds the subjects life, destroys the possibility of being part of a project of the subject and actor Aymara of building a space that becomes an “Aymara place” due to the existence of significance/sense.

## References

- Bachelard, G. (1965). *La poética del espacio*. México D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Bolívar, A; Domingo, J.; Fernández M. (2001). *La Investigación Biográfica-Narrativa en Educación*. Madrid: Editorial La Muralla, S.A.
- Connelly, M.; Clandinin, J. (1995). Relatos de Experiencia e Investigación Narrativa. In: Larrosa, J. et al, *Déjame que te Cuente, Ensayos sobre Narrativa y Educación*: p.11-59. Barcelona: Laertes.
- Dubet, F. (1994). *Sociologie de l'expérience*. París: Editorial Seuil.
- Dubet, F.; Martucelli, D. (1999). *¿En qué Sociedad Vivimos?*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1999.
- Dubet, F.; Martucelli, D. (1997). *Sociología de la Experiencia Escolar*. París: Editorial Seuil.

- Dubet, F.; Wieviorka, M. et al. (1996). *Société Fragmentée: le multiculturalisme en débat*. Paris: La Découverte.
- González, S. (2000). Del refugio a la globalización: Reflexiones sobre el aymara chileno y la escuela pública en el siglo XX. In: S. González, F. Mena, C. Chipana, C. González, H. Alegría y P. García, *Educación y Pueblo Aymara*: p. 3-67. Iquique: Universidad Arturo Prat, Instituto de Estudios Andinos Isluga.
- Gutiérrez, J. y Delgado, J.M. (1995). Teoría de la observación. In: Delgado, J.M. y Gutiérrez, J. (coord.), *Métodos y técnicas cualitativas de investigación en Ciencias Sociales*: p. 141-173. Madrid: Síntesis.
- Hernández, I. (2003). *Autonomía o Ciudadanía Incompleta. El pueblo Mapuche en Chile y Argentina*. CEPAL, Pehuén Ediciones. Santiago.
- IGM (2010). Atlas Geográfico para la educación. Santiago de Chile: IGM.
- Lowenthal, D. (1998). *El pasado es un país extraño*. Madrid: Akal.
- Massey, D. (2012). Espacio, tiempo y responsabilidad política en una era de desigualdad global. In: Albet, A.; Benach, N. *Un sentido global del lugar*. Barcelona: Icaria Editorial.
- McEwan, H.; Egan, K., (comp). (1998). *La Narrativa en la Enseñanza, el Aprendizaje y la Investigación*. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores.
- Merleau Ponty, M. (1975). *Fenomenología de la Percepción*. Barcelona: Ediciones Península.
- Michaelsen, S.; Johnson, D. (1997). *Teoría de la Frontera. Los límites de la política cultural*. Barcelona: Gedisa.
- Monast, J. E. Los Indios Aimaraes. (1972). *¿Evangelizados o solamente bautizados?*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Carlos Lohlé.
- Montes, F. (1987). *La Máscara de Piedra: Simbolismo y Personalidad Aymaras en la Historia*. s/r: Editorial Quipus.
- Moreira, R. (2011). *Pensar e ser em Geografia*. Sao Paulo: Editora Contexto.
- Olmos, M. (coord.). (2007). *Antropología de las Fronteras. Alteridad, historia e identidad más allá de la línea*. México D.F: El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Miguel Ángel Porrúa.
- Relph, E. (1976). *Place and Placelessness*. Londres: Pion.
- Ricoeur, P. (2000). *Del texto a la acción*. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Rosendahl, Z. (1999). *Hierópolis: O Sagrado e o Urbano*. Río de Janeiro: Editora UERJ.
- Ruiz, J. (1999). *Metodología de la Investigación Cualitativa*. Bilbao, País Vasco: Universidad de Deusto.

- Santos, M. (2000). *La naturaleza del espacio geográfico. Técnica y Tiempo; Razón y Emoción*. Barcelona: Ariel Geografía.
- Strauss, A.; Corbin, J. (2002). *Bases de la investigación cualitativa : técnicas y procedimientos para desarrollar la teoría fundamentada* Medellín: Editorial Universidad de Antioquia.
- Saviani, D. (1980). *Educacao: Do senso comun à consciencia filosófica*. Sao Paulo: Cortez Editora, Autores Associados.
- Taylor Charles (1993). *El Multiculturalismo y la Política del Reconocimiento*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Tuan, Y. (1977). *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Tuan, Y. (1980). Topofilia: um estudo da percepção, atitudes e valores do meio ambiente. São Paulo: Difel.
- Tuan, Y. (1983). Espaço e Lugar: A Perspectiva de Experiencia. São Paulo: Difel.
- Tuan Y. (2004). Cosmos y Hogar. Un punto de vista cosmopolita. Madrid: Melusina.
- Tuan Y. (2003). Escapismo. Barcelona: Península-Atalaya.
- Van Kessel, J. (1992a). *Cuando Arde el Tiempo Sagrado*. La Paz: HISBOL.
- Van Kessel, J. (1992b). *Del Holocausto al Progreso*. La Paz: HISBOL.
- Van Kessel, J. (1988). *Los Aymaras Contemporáneos de Chile (1879-1985)*. Iquique: Centro de Investigación de la Realidad del Norte.
- Van Kessel, J.; Condori, D. (1992). *Criar la Vida. Trabajo y Tecnología en el Mundo Andino*. Santiago de Chile: Vivarium.
- Watzlawick, P., Krieg, P. (1995). *El ojo del observador. Contribuciones al constructivismo*. Barcelona: Gedisa Editorial.
- Wright, J. (1947). Terrae Incognitae: el lugar de la imaginación en Geografía” In: Anales de la Asociación de Geógrafos Americanos, Vol.37: 1-15

### **Biographical statements**

**Dr. Marcelo GARRIDO PEREIRA** is a member of Department of Geography, Academy of Christian Humanism University in Chile.