



The Wawas (Boys and Girls) in the Aymara Culture (PUNO-PERU)



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Summary

The research is about male and female children in the Aymara culture, in the context they are known as wawas (children), the main objective is to describe the importance of male and female children in the family and communal context. Without reaching the universalization of the childhood concept, as modern western culture does. Qualitative methodology was essential, using the three instruments to collect information: interview guide, participant observation and life stories; all from the anthropological point of view, in order to address the research focused on the upbringing of Aymara children, to contribute to gender equality. For this, as a result, it is had that the male and female children are blessings of the deities and are essential for continuity of the family and the community.

Keywords: Community, family, children, women and men.

Introduction

Wisdom implies knowledge for the Aymara communities, which have been systematically discriminated and annihilated [1], but other forms of raising loved ones still apply, in the Aymara context children are wawas (children) [2], this notion is elastic, wawa is also said to the young of animals, plants, to the new moon [3]. Childhood is a very special and beautiful stage that everyone would prefer to live again, because when the child lives in the countryside he is in contact with everything around him and is very sensitive to the needs of each passing moment. That is why the child experiences life in a special way. Children make the home shine when a child is born in the family it is thoughtful (money), if it is a girl (abundance) [4]. The Aymaras claim that the Wawa bring products to eat, because they are the favorite grandchildren of the Achachilas (deities), that's why when in the ritual celebrations quite a few boys and girls gather, the elderly affirm that the Achachilas are happy and Pachamama (Mother Nature) is going to provide them with their food. This question has to do with education, which means, In the Aymara area, there is talk of yatiña which means knowing and also living [5].

Boys and girls in Aymara culture require special upbringing [6]. When they are born, they have to be washed with cold water, so that they are strong in life and some families do not breastfeed immediately, so in life they are not hungry every so often. Boys

and girls cannot see the sun for 6 months, because there is a belief that they can be blind, mothers have to breastfeed the wawas for at least two years, when they start to eat, children should not eat the first cow's milk (the *carastro*), the blood of animals. The upbringing of the wawas is with affection and sweetie ness, the children grow up together with their parents, in the community there is no childcare center.

Methods

In the research, the ethnographic method was applied together with the participant observation and performance technique, in order to carry out qualitative research, in order to understand the upbringing of Aymara children. Culturalist theory was used and has a focus from the peasant vision. This allows us to understand in its wide dimension the importance of understanding the life of the Aymara Wawas.

Research Results

The child in the family

For the Aymara, having wawa is not a problem, nor poverty. Having a child is a great blessing from God, from the divinities of Pachamama (mother nature). Having a child is like having happiness, joy, warmth, abundance, etc., at home [4]. The

upbringing of children is a learning of family coexistence. In this regard Doña Nelia Mamani Flores - Ccota - Humatumasí tells us:

“... Having wawa is very nice, it is feeling complete, where you learn to have patience, tolerance, affection, kindness, to love and be loved by the wawas, with their tender and smiling gaze steals our hearts, that's why my husband tells me; having a child is a great happiness is to feel like a garden full of flowers...”

In the Aymara worldview the birth of a new creature is the arrival of joy to the family [2]. If there were no children, there would be no life, say the peasant families. In this regard, Don Maximo Apaza Aro from the El Collao Province assures us:

“For me children have enough value, because they are the ones that bring joy to the family, they are also the future of our family. So when we were giving birth to my children, as usual we received the son in a diaper, we wrapped him until the placenta came out and then we cutted his navel with a scissor. The placenta is also like a son, who is given a wash and then wrapped in white paper, and my wife usually buries it inside the room in a safe place.”

Special kids

Aymara families carefully take into account certain physical characteristics of the newborn, such as cleft lips, kayullas (those that are born standing), sunaqi (which has a double fontanelle), Tallachu (those that have 6 toes on their feet), ispallas (twins) etc. indicate that they are yusan munata (children or people loved by God) [7], in other areas they are considered jaqi illa (special children), especially the ispallas (twins) and twins, people with fertility or regeneration. To this class of people, although they do not invoke or give special offerings as in the farm and animal husbandry, they are given special treatment. They are given a special banquet at some parties and in marriages, they fear making them suffer or cry, hurting and rebuking them, because they could be affected by the energy or telluric forces.

Firstborn daughter

In the family the first-born son has enough meaning, when a daughter is born it is luck for the family [8]. For them, for the Aymara there will be bonanza in the house, in addition the lady who gave birth to a daughter in her first childbirth, is considered as juntu ampara (with a warm hand, that is to say a prodigious hand), she will not miss anything in the house. While if in the first delivery the baby is male, means that at home there will always be a lack of food or they will have problems, that is why they affirm that these are thaya amparas (cold-handed, lacking vital energy), they very easily run out of products or hardly get them. This is in relation to the firstborn son, but afterwards it does not have much meaning. Rather, the sons are well received because they are the ones who will help their father, they will also bear or keep the surname, while the daughters are considered as thayan apaña (who is blown away by the wind). That is to say, when they already have their husbands, they are almost always taken to the husband's communities, generally they do not stay next to their parents [9].

While the men mostly stay on their parents' property, so they see each other closely and help each other with the parents. To this respect we have the testimony of Juan Crisostomo Chino from Pilcuyo-Ilave:

“I always wanted to have a son with my wife and thank God I have him, because that son is the one who will defend the family, he will be the head of the family and will keep my surname and help me carry out all the tasks in the agricultural production and care of the cattle.”

Orphans

In all the communities there are always orphaned children, whom their parents have left at an early age, some have not even met them. These children have remained under the protection of their grandparents or uncles, they have suffered enough because they have not been raised with the warmth and love of their mother, least of all with the affection of their father, necessity has forced them from a young age to carry out production farm and care for animals and know more than children living with their parents. That is why you hear people say in the fields: -I know more because I have grown up as an orphan of my mother and father-, since I was little I already knew how to do agriculture, since I was little I knew how to cook. God helps these suffering children: when they are adults they easily carry out the raising of the animals, for these they are told that they have enough knowledge and secrets of raising the plant, soil, water, landscape, etc. [6].

Rituals of birth

In the Aymara communities all activities are carried out ritually. With the more reason, the new creature is received with a ritual that consists of asking permission from the kunturmama (sacred name of the house), cleaning through the incense with incense. If it is invoked the Achachilas (protective hills), Pachamama (mother nature) so that the new being arrives without difficulties. Once the birth is carried out, the child is smoked, they make him go around the outside of the house. In the same way, the placenta is buried sacredly with a small ritual and in a special place, even with some tools for children so that the children get along with the raising of the farm and other chores of life.

Child's personality

In the Aymara culture, the formation of the child's personality is influenced by everything that happens in the human community [10], in nature and with deities. It also influences the moment and time of birth, the seasons, the saint of the day and the festivals of the village, are the first influences that the newborn receives. In this way, the child's personality gradually develops. For example, regarding the days when they are born: if they are born on a Tuesday or Friday, it means that the child will go wrong. It also depends a lot on the waytusiri (on the person who has raised or received the newborn), because the child captures the first energies of people, these can be negative or positive. They even assert that the one who receives first is from the deity (Achachila and Pachamama),

who has already transmitted their attributes, because the hills also have different attributes. Therefore, it is often heard that the child has the character or quality of his waytusiripa.

The child's personality, as we say again, depends a lot on how the placenta is treated [6]. For the child to be a worker, they usually bury the placenta with miniature tillage tools, made by their father and so that the girls are more oriented towards the tasks of a woman, they usually bury the placenta with kitchen utensils, some tend to bury in the pens so that you have affection for the animals.

It also depends on the responsibilities of the *ichutata* and *ichumama* (godfather and godmother of baptism), which influence more on the formation of the child's personality, as described in the following phrase *ichutatan ichumaman wilapan ch'aqt'atawa* (with the drop of blood their godfather and godmother has been harmonized), so in the communities they take special care when choosing the "godfather" and the "godmother", they prefer people with a good personality (of good character, respected, wealthy people) in a way that the child's behavior is the same as that of the godfather and the godmother. The child will follow the path of the godparents. If the godparents have good farms and enough animals, the godson will also have good farms and animals. In addition the godfather is chosen to be his best advisor. The western and universalist conception of childhood forgets the importance of the formative role of culture in relation to values, practices, representations, social roles or others [11].

Children's games come true

Children take everything they see their parents do into "play" and in play awaken all their faculties that nest inside them. In the game there are children who know how to build houses very well, children who easily get animals, there are children who very well exercise the function of a *paqu* (healer) and when they are adults they always have those faculties or abilities, because they woke up as a child that gift given by nature. In this regard we have testimony from Rosendo Ccosi from Acora:

"The children in the house are never calm, whatever we do, they do too. Once at carnivals we at home have performed a small ritual together with them, then on other days, just as we have done, they have also performed their ritual at home. When we

hatched for the blanket and belt, they also do the same, secretly they take out the wool and in the pampa grazing the sheep were hatching the belts and the small blankets."

Conclusion

Wawas in the Aymara culture are welcome in the family and community context, that is why they are received with much affection and joy and a ritual ceremony of thanks to the entire natural community is performed. There are also orphaned children under the protection of their relatives from their parents and in reality they are the ones who know the most about caring for livestock and raising crops. The children's personality is determined at the time of birth, strengthened with the participation of the godparents and godmothers of baptism is normal to hear the phrase *ichutatan ichumaman wilapan ch'aqt'atawa* (with the drop of blood from their godfather and godmother has been harmonized), children, when they are adults will be the same as their godparents. The universalist western vision forgets the diversity of raising children.

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