



Traditions of death in the indigenous culture of the province of Bolivar (Ecuador)

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Abstract- In the Andean world there are multiplicities of cultural traditions embodied in various forms and practices, despite the various forms of cultural homogenization, and constant persecution by State institutions, cultural traditions, beliefs and customs did not disappear in their entirety, since the cultures knew how to hermetically and carefully conserve the public good, using it permanently in a clandestine way, which helped to generate the transmission of knowledge from generation to generation through orality as a bonding and linking strategy of learning, allowing to maintain up to the present; This is the case of the various ritual activities carried out by indigenous cultures during death, for which it is supported by the use of primary and secondary sources; demonstrate that the ritualities of death in those cultures are not limited only to interpretation from a philosophical current and in an individualized way. To understand the lengthening of life in the spiritual world is to guarantee the prolongation of its existence from this new approach to the integral theory; and there should be no gap and incoherence in the application of the moral rule and the dialectic established within each culture, during the ritual time of the death or death of the family member, their home constitutes social space and symbolic space. In addition, the social conglomerate begins to live and share the spiritual world from the real world. Some people do not come to possess this knowledge of holistic life, because they have not lived that reality. However, it is important to venture into and go beyond this spiritual dynamic towards relational coexistence and merge interculturality.

Keywords: Orality, culture, dialectic, lavatory, and rituality.

I. INTRODUCTION

To get into the subject, it is important to contextualize that within the construction of the Nation-State, the traditional liberal ideals were determined to consolidate based on the mandatory incorporation of the populations into the majority society.

In the Ecuadorian case, they were concerned with grouping and incorporating the entire population without considering the differences and cultural particularities; in such a way that they were permanently oriented towards the homogenization of cultural diversity through a number of strategies. However, why did minority cultures in the population sphere continue to carry out various cultural activities clandestinely? Why and how did they conserve the customs and traditions of indigenous cultures in different ways the rituality of death?, Why ritual activities did it loaded with a multidimensional magnitude of ritual symbolism?

To answer the questions posed, the sources are analyzed: primary, observation and personal experience, to finally show that the cultural ritual activities of death perform during the 4 days, on each of the days they develop tasks within a deep experience of the spirituality to that space of tranquility, happiness and joy that allows the reunion with oneself and with others; that is to say to share and live in the spiritual world and the real world.

In addition, the Ecuadorian anthropologist Federico Aguilo is clarified in his text the man from Chimborazo to his approach "loving accompaniment by relatives and intimates has its culmination in the very act of burial", this assertion is not true, since those cultures They continue to carry out activities related to the spiritualities of uku pichay (cleaning the house), takshay (laundry for clothes), and armay (bathing for the mourners). These are developed within a holistic and integral harmony of those who attend to live the spiritual-real dialectical world of indigenous cultures.

Reference framework or state of the art.

There is a diversity of research and bibliographic publications from various perspectives, epistemological and philosophical currents such as: rituality in the Andes, Chimborazo man, ritual symbolism; each one contributes with theories to understand the spiritual world from the perspective of structuralism, functionalism, pragmatism, empiricism, an individualized perception of interpretation of otherness.

Somehow the authors like Botero, Aguilo, Sánchez Parga, Rueda they lived together to understand and understand the relationship of the spiritual and real world of indigenous cultures from their own philosophical currents. However, at present it is urgent to analyze and theorize in unity of the theoretical currents to fuse a new theory and avoid fragmentation of the cultural codes of those cultures that convey a sense of belonging from that holistic integrality that using two words live-feel explains multi-dimensionality of the spiritual world - real world and fuses unity in the diversity of individualized epistemological currents.

The interpretation of the spiritual world from the real world, dialectical and integral logics allows us to understand dualities of reciprocity spaces - solidarity of the Andean world and to build new theoretical approaches to the world of spirituality, from that collective, dynamic and integral cultural parameter in which they develop indigenous cultures with an intercultural and cross-cultural vision in a globalized world. For "formal understanding and understanding the world of life as a social space, a binding medium for those who coordinate their actions in such a symbolic space" (Habermas 1999: 177).

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS.

The work was carried out in indigenous communities: San Bartolo, Casipamba, Chibuco, Tolapungo, Pircapamba, Paltabamba, and Laguacoto belonging to the parish of Veintimilla of Guaranda, province of Bolívar (Ecuador), places of the ritual practice of death were selected in the three processes: preparation - burial of the deceased - rituality; for which the analytical, critical, reflective and purposeful methods were used, in order to direct new epistemological approaches, through direct observation, conversation and participation.

Results, conceptual framework.

To continue developing the rituality of death, I will describe the interviews and observations of various cultural activities carried out during the four days of experience of rituality:

- Once the death is known, each member of the community, whether family, friends, neighbors, compadre, comes to visit the home of the bereaved to deliver food products and / or money. During this act the division of labor occurs; women are in charge of cooking, men look for firewood, provide food; these activities are generally not the mourners but people outside who do not have any blood relationship.
- Acquired from a coffin and rent from the funeral home, they begin by making the deceased dress in the best suits, then he is introduced into the coffin accompanied by the most preferred utensils.
- During the wake and burial, cries are heard with a more accentuated singing expression in the woman who in a low and sustained voice is heard singing mixed with moans and sighs repeating the strengths of the deceased, at the same time the absence.
- At night there is distribution of food and various games such as: Game of onion, bone, rooster, and rabbit, in this regard the interviewee says it is very old, my parents played, we also do it. This game consists of the following: all the people form a circle, the legs must be together to cover with a blanket, then they invent with various fabrics or suits they build the rabbit, it has to circulate below the legs, the people in charge are that are covered with the blanket without moving the blanket and the legs, there is another group that is observing where the rabbit circulates, and throws itself on the legs of the person that the rabbit is supposedly circulating, the person who allows to catch pays a financial fine, is hit with the rabbit and exits the game. The person who throws himself fails to catch the rabbit also pays the fine (Chacha Aurelio, Larcapamba, 2017). The money collected is publicly delivered to the widow or widower.
- The third day prepares to go to the funeral at the time of the departure of the deceased, they begin to say goodbye, everyone cries and after receiving mass in the Catholic church they move to the cemetery for their final burial, again the moans of the women praising the strengths of the deceased, it is an insistent regret for the virtues and benefits of the deceased, how sad the life of their relatives will be without that person.

- On the fourth day another activity called *uku pichay* (house cleaning) and *armay* (ritual bath or lavatory) begins, on this day the people who accompanied the funeral continue to arrive, as they continue to make an appearance, they help themselves the food provided by the mourners.

Then they begin with the cleaning of the house or the *uku pichay* consists of cleaning the deceased's house, for which the son-in-law, daughter-in-law or brothers-in-law are in charge of carrying out this activity they use the plants of *marco*, *chilca* and *santa maría*.

Certain people place needles or pins in the corners of the walls of the house, after cleaning the garbage is taken to the outside, and the person who located the needles or pin begins to search among the garbage if it does not appear, people who did the cleaning, cancel an economic fine or in products according to the fixation by the participants present.

Then, move to carry out the *armay* or the bath to be carried out in a river or the union of several rivers called *TINKU*, for which, they carry food products (bread, coffee and *panela*). Daughters-in-law or sons-in-law carry the clothes and blankets of the deceased to wash in the mentioned river.

- The organizers are the *compadres* sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, they are responsible for bathing all the bereaved. All those accompanying the lavatory take turns to bathe, for which they use soap, nettle; after the bath there is a person in charge of blowing cigarette smoke and swallowing the clothes of the people who bathed. And people who don't bathe pay a financial fine. While the others are in charge of distributing the food. After this activity, they again move to the home of the bereaved to deliver the laundry of the deceased and bid farewell to the family" (Zaruma, 2017).

- The descriptions of the ritual activities allow us to visualize how those cultures, despite the cultural homogenization maintained to this day through "rituality in death" to unload the oral tradition in the great magnitude of ritual symbolisms of interpretations, which are expressed in reciprocity - solidarity, connection with the spiritual-real world, person-water relationship, person-energy plants, cigarette-drink, person-suit, deceased- Catholic religion, deceased- earth.

- These immense cultural riches during the "rituality in death" are developed within a binary logic and holistic cosmic dialectic; that is to say, the ritual activities of death is a concentrated repository of knowledge that does not focus solely on an explanation from a certain epistemological current of structuralism, functionalism and empiricism, but rather fuses the unit, producing an "integral theory" in charge of explaining the behavior of human beings in the spiritual world and the real world, that interiority and exteriority of indigenous cultures. From this epistemological approach, the people of the real world prepare the other for the trip and experience to the spiritual world, to that encounter with the other people of another symbolic space since he or she lost the figure or the category of human quality of flesh- bone. Then the human being that belongs to the real world begins to live that spiritual world within dialectic moments of sadness - joy.

The various practices of rituals become symbolic spaces, and also at the same time develop on the basis of binary elements; These opposite poles guarantee the prolongation of life in the spiritual world where the opposite poles interact, at the same time they are complementary from an Andean binary logic *kay pacha-jawa pacha* (present - future) the transfer to that known - unknown world; For which, during the four days of the so-called "wake" they live within the spiritual world and the real world, and they must not disobey the moral rule that is established at the cognitive level; That is to say, there should be no lack of food, mass, *uku pichay*, *armay*, the lack of one of these activities the person who corresponds to the spiritual world will permanently demand the real world.

In this immense context of cultural capital operates the "Andean dualism", which can be conceived as an organizing principle of life that is built through cultural contrasts of the countryside / nature and social life; that is, under the binary logic of left-right, man-woman, up-down, *hanan-urin*, hot-cold; These relationships also imply an asymmetry that is the product of the permanent interrelation of the cosmic cultural dimension; In other words, organic cultural asymmetry is a peculiarity of each culture, since each one has a certain complementary control over the development of the other (Palomino Flores 1984: 18), the relations between two complementary ones become a fundamental unit, sequence logic and dialectic. Therefore, orality has been the main strategy source of historical preservation and knowledge of the past, for the reconstruction of the past and projecting into the future, that is, using and practicing the word *ÑAWPA* (look back - past and walk forward - future) in appropriate and adequate spaces; This word is a solidly developed and strongly chained memory, all the traditions contain the truth made more meaningful at the collective level, it is a living library, it is attached and recorded in the memory the traditions the daily use is often defined in the custom, as also the existence of the world and society, is the free expression of human thought (Jan Vansina 1968).

The preservation of knowledge about the rituality of death constitutes the most visible component and with the greatest cultural expression, due to the “forms, expressions, customs, beliefs, common practices, rules, norms, codes, clothing, religion, rituals. The same happens with words like science, knowledge or faith, concrete words with different evaluations and meanings” (Weber, Durkheim).

On the other hand, Sánchez Parga, states that “it is the way by which the individual gets to participate in the social order. The lines of thought that are delivered early and mold children to carry out correct attitudes” (1998: 10). In addition, Malinowski points out that “the domestic group, the family, as a place where cultural continuity is primarily guaranteed, and also considers that every organized institution provides a specific exercise by virtue of which the members who join must learn different rules” what has allowed the development and growth of the human being with a sense of belonging within a worldview of the spiritual world - real world and they become “*the generative principles of different and distinctive practices*” (Bourdieu 2000: 20).

In the worldview of indigenous culture from the integral theory, “rituality in death” is to live, feel and be part of cultural activities so as not to distance oneself and away from the holistic and integral life of the human being, to share the spiritual world from the deepest part that leads to the other world known and at the same time unknown and from that place protect spiritually, which “serve as a guide for behaviors” (Sánchez, 1997: 3). The rites and beliefs are as old as man) JAMES, 1973: 21), the practice of rites is an activity that has been done since the time of the ancestors, with the sole desire that the group, by updating the practice of ritual acts, remain united in time” (Botero, 1990: 96).

Rituality in death is the instance in which friendship relations with the mourners are reinforced and the opportunity to draw ties of solidarity on the part of the community (Botero, 1990: 96-100), and it is not only solidarity it is also reciprocity, since death opens the doors to that mysterious world beyond, that is, a radically different new life. This shows that the relatives try to make the ritual act the best and seek all means to satisfy the soul so that it can continue on its way normally. And if he has had a stumbling block in the ritual act, the deceased returns to ask the family members and complain about some deficiency in the ritual, through dreams, becoming the most frequent symptom of the return of the soul (AGUILO, 1995: 211-217).

This author argues that loving companionship by relatives and intimates has its culmination in the act of burial itself. This is not true, since on the fourth day after the burial they still continue with the *uku pichay*, army ritual; that is to say, the cleaning of the house, the bath in rivers that are sacred places for these ritual acts.

These are developed within the dynamics of the gestures of blowing is one of the characteristics of the Andean world (Urbano, 1976: 3-9), and is used for various purposes. The most frequent of blowing is to invoke the sacred presence, the attempt to also establish a relationship between who is blowing. The drink in Ecuador appears as a depository of social and symbolic ritual charges (Sanchez Parga, 1995: 317- 318), constituting a vital element and cultural contribution to the ritual world in the sense of the use of this element” (Botero, 1990: 105). This activity is generally carried out so that bad luck can go, the bath is to refresh the pain, the fatigue that the body has during the days of mourning (interview 2017).

III. CONCLUSION

Finally, it must be remembered that indigenous peoples and cultures have special places to perform rituals in death, there is no rigid division between the spiritual worlds, the natural world. These elements are part of the dialectical unity that at the same time are opposite but complementary. This unity is what determines the influence of one world on the other. In this sense, rituals are moments in which communication between the two worlds, spiritual and real, takes place. In addition, this relationship is orderly and balanced, these two universes allow living in the spiritual world, and rituals are considered mechanisms to maintain balance and order in the world. Without them, life is meaningless. Therefore, it cannot be approached from isolated epistemologies, but from integral theory, so as not to unravel the holistic and integral sense of indigenous cultures.

There is no practice or activity that is devoid of its ritual counterpart. This is considered a guarantee for successful completion, to safeguard individual and collective health. Some people never come to possess this knowledge because they have not lived that reality (Arvello, 1992).

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