

Šoqo Pawlu and His Passengers  
Šoqo Pawlu nižas'a niž chhichs' zoñinaka

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*Śoqu Pawlu and His Passengers* is written in both English and the Uru-Chipayan language. While a fictional tale, it draws inspiration from Uru-Chipayan practices and the artist's collaborative work in creatively coexisting with wind people. Set in the Collasuyo desert between Chile and Bolivia, the story follows two protagonists named after Bustamante and Lázaro's grandfathers as they navigate the challenging terrain. As the air family gradually reduces their forceful winds, the travelers return home, sharing their experiences.

By recognizing these winds as beings, Bustamante and Lázaro explore the affective, sensorial, and social relationships formed within our atmosphere – where shared coexistence and knowing how to be in good relational terms between beings is instrumental to survival. Similar to the wind, this story transcends borders, not solely coming from an Indigenous practice. Instead, it signifies a fusion of different worlds, entities, and practices. Ultimately, blurring the parting of air, wind, sound, and breath.

Not long ago, the west winds relentlessly passed over the *Collasuyo*, located between Chile and Bolivia's shared deserts.

This violence caused great resentment in others.

Ana ancha aźqa, ni taxata thami anchaž thamatčha ana susikchiś ni  
Collasuyu ch'eqtı yoqa nuž, ni Bolivia nižaša Chile ch'eqtı yoqkiś  
Xalla nižtikištan ni thamiki walxa žoñinakž žaxwa šhiknatčha.

- Because the winds uprooted the plants, there was nothing to eat.
- Because the rain clouds from the east could not arrive, there was nothing to drink.
- Because neither the llamas, the flamingos, nor the humans could hear each other speak, there was no understanding.

- Ni śqalanaka śep'a kalhsipachaž phujšnatčha nužkiś anaž čhhulu luhlśmi želatčha.
- Ni tuwantan ulžkiñi thiri anaž irantižkatčha nužkiś anaž čhhul qhaś likhśmi želatčha.
- Ni xwalanakami, parinami nižaša žoñinakami ninakpora anaž nonšñi atatčha. Ana nășukatačha.

No trace in the sand.  
The frozen quinoa.  
The dead animals.

Philkıś liju t'arhputačha  
Kulašti liju ch'iwžta  
Uywanakami tikhśi.

At that time, the authorities of the Urus gathered in a *Putucu*, a sturdy shelter made of mud, to rest and converse in silence, protected from the winds. Once inside, one next to the other began to share alcohol and coca leaves, which slowly diluted their wisdom into the authorities' tongues.

Raising from the porous earth of the *Collasuyo* desert, the breath spirits of *Šamiris* awaken and lead the conversation. More than clear voices, dry asthmatic whispers began to emerge as words.<sup>1</sup>

Xalla ni timpu, ni qhaś žoñinakž jilirinakaki parliśapa tshi putukkiś aksičha.  
Ni qhuyaki walxa śuma phaykištan qhuytatačha jejšapami parliśapami  
śirwatčha ni qhuy qos ana thamiž šoxrichta khiśapa. Xalla nuž thappacha  
qhuy jiyara jułsi, khoka askan parla śumat śumat thelhžnatčha.

Ni Collasuyo ch'eqtı uchh yoqkištan žaśičha, ni śamirž animunakaki  
nužkiś śuma parla thelsqatchičha.

Ni qostan čiśmi qhoñ xorami tshan kana khissičha.

»We must send an emissary to go to the root of the problem...«  
 »To follow the path of these winds...«  
 »To walk *ažkin* (far away)...«  
 »Where they speak other *taqunaka* (languages)...«  
 »To learn where the wind originates from and why it is coming so strong...«  
 So they said.

»tshi žoñi ni thamžpuntu śiśi kuchanchukača, ni thamž jikhś apžla  
 ažkinx oqhla...«  
 »ni yaqha taqu chĩñinakaž nikhu...«  
 »nižaśa xaqhsikiŝtan ni thami thon ni śiśla nižaśa qhažtikiŝtan ni thami  
 ancha phorśanti thon!...« Xalla nuž khetča.

Word-of-mouth began to spread the *arawaś* (rumor) of the need for an emissary within the town, but no one volunteered until Geronimo, who, the moment he heard about it, quickly decided to step up and take on the mission.

Xalla nuž ninakpora walxa kintu oqhqatchiča tshi žoñi ti wathkiŝtan  
 kuchanchukapanča khikan, pero ana jekhmi oqažkhiñi želatkiča, xalla  
 nužkiś Geronimo ni kintu śiśku rattulla quśh thutśiica weril oqaž khikan.

That same night, he prepared his meal for the adventure, *ch'arkhi de Llama* (llama jerky), *Coquita* (coca leaves), *Pito de Quinoa* (toasted quinoa flour), water, and some alcohol. In the morning, he set out on the journey west, always walking against the wind. He said that he was walking slowly, with his head down, making force with his entire *xanchi* (body).

This is how he said he was walking, while the winds were blowing him from one side to the other, from left to right, as if someone with their invisible hands were pushing him. After many hours, he had arrived, without realizing it, at a village called *Villa Vitalina*. Right there on that pampa, he decided to rest.

Xalla ni wenpacha žaqa pāchiča, ch'arki, khoka, koñi, qhaś, awarinti liju  
 quži thakśiča. Nužkiś xaqawenśan taxachuk wiyaja saraqchiča, thami  
 thonśqutñi, ŝumat acha kolśi oqatkiča walxa ni thamkiś thurt'aśkan.  
 Xalla nižtax oqatkiča. Ni thamiŝti tshi lātuśa tshi lātuśa tekwatkiča  
 ŝqarqhuttan nižaśa žewqhuttan tekwatiča, tshi žoñi ana naychuk  
 qharhžtan tewkžkas nižta. Neqhŝtan ŝita oqhžku wax Witalina khita watha  
 irantichiča, xalla neqhś ni pampikiś xaraśśiča.

The next day, he passes by two great mountains that he only knew about in stories. The mountain *Tata Sabaya*, and *Mama Pisa*. Surprised and intimidated, he offered them some of his food in exchange for protection on the trip.

Geronimo *qhawś* (shouts) while looking up. »You take care of my steps, *Mallku Sabaya*, and you too, *Mama T'alla Pisa*,« so he said.<sup>2</sup>

Neqhŝtan xaqatažu, tshi piśk ana paxta paqh kur kežu watča, ni Tata  
 Śaway paqh kuru, nižaśa Mama T'alla Pisa ni cheržku walxa iŝpantichiča

nízaša tsuksiča nužkiš nīž žaqalla onanchičha ti wiyajkiš ni tshitsinaxu. Gerónimo tsewkchuk cherši qhawča, »mallku asim werh thāžkakiča« xalla nuž khichikiča.

He continues on the road without knowing that he was walking near different towns that the winds were directing him toward while pushing him from left to right, which is also north to south. He was passing through *Pisiga, Sitari, Escapina, Sitani, and Mauque*. As the days went by, the fatigue became more and more difficult to ignore.

Tira oqhchiča, ana nayžku yaqha watanak kežu watča xalla nuž ni thami ni žoñi irpatča žew qhuttanša śqar qhuttanša tekwžku tewkžku xalla niki użatintan wartintanča, xalla nižta Pisika, Sitari, watatkiča, Sitani, Escapiña, Mauque. Xalla nuž śapuru oqghan tshan tshan ch'amax khisnatča ni wiyaja oqhski.

One day, when he reached *Isluga*, he decided to seek refuge in a ravine, where he met another walker.

Nužkiš tshi nōx, Isluka irantižku, tshi q'awkiš xaraña qhursičha pero neqhs tshi yaqha oqhlayñi žonžtan śalchiča.

Geronimo first talked to him in different languages; in Aymara, »*khisitasa?*«, in Ckunsu, »*lticku Tchemaya?*«, in Quechua, »*Pitaq Kanki?*«, in Castellano, »*quien eres?*« The traveler listened and replied, »*Yo soy Alfredo; I am a walker, and I come from the south,*« so he says the other said.

»Very well,« declared Geronimo. »Then here, we will both rest quietly.«

Gerónimo ni oqhlayñi žonžkiš thapamana nīž śišta tawqkištan pewksikiča, taqu aymara »*khititasa?*« taqu español »*Quién eres?*« taqu quechua »*Pitaq Kanki?*« taqu Ckunsu »*lticku Tchemaya?*« ni žoñiki ch'uj nonsičha nužkiš khičičha, »*Alfredo khitičha, wiyaja oqhlayinča warchuktan thonuča.*« Xalla nuž khichikiča ni yaqha žoñiki.

Gerónimo khiča, »*Ancha walil nužkhanak,*« »nižtak teqhs pukultanž quš phiya jejžla«

That day, as the night passed, unexpectedly the same dream visited them; they dreamt that a tall, white gentleman (*q'ara*) with long and tousled hair greeted them and wanted to shake their left hands, but the humans offered him their right hands. Confused, nobody could shake hands.

The long-haired person told them both: »This ravine is our resting house; here I sleep with you too; I am Śoqo Pawlu, a wind-person, my younger brothers are Kaśpara, the next one Paltaśara, and the last one is called Qalasaya. We are a powerful wind family from the west that travels to the east, to different places, taking in different routes. If you want to know us well, go and see us being born.«

Ni šeś ninakaki ni q'awkiš thxaxča nužkiš ni wēn, ana pinsita tshi wiyazaž čhhūžqalča; tuž čhhūžqalča tshi lachh k'ankhi žoñi chertqalča ana žhikta ch'aški lachh charchiś, ni žoñi ninaka tsānchiča nízaša śqar qhara



Drawing by Ariel Bustamante and Germán Lázaro.  
Courtesy the artists

thās pekchiča pero ninakašte žew qhara thās pekchiča, nužkiś inaq khissiča ana qhara tansini atassiča.

Ni lachh charchiś žoñi ninakžkiś khichikiča: »ti q'awaki wethnaka xaraśiś qhuyača, xalla teqhsiśaqaś ančukatan thxaxuča, werhki Šoqu Pawlutča, tshi tam-žoñi, weth laqhnakaki tinakača Kašpara, niž xaru Paltašara nižaša ni pichuki Qalasaya khitača, werhnakki taxachukta žonča, paqhi nižaša walxa aśiś. Taxatan tuwanchuk thapaqhutñi oqinča. Werhnakž paxspekčaxniki ančuk oqa werhnak saltiñiž nikhu.«

The next day, to better know these winds, they decided to obey what they had dreamed and walk together to the west. So, they continued the journey together while the winds covered their skin, hair, and eyes with *philžtan* (sand). Almost blinding to them, without knowing where exactly they were walking through, they arrived at Aravilla Lagoon.

Xaqatažu ninakaki ni čhhüzta íspantichi ninakaž čhhüzta xaru oqhs quśh thutśiča ni thami šuma paxšapa. Xalla nuž, ninakaž tira nuž oqan ni tamiki ninakž žhuki pilžtan thatžinča, ninakaki xos šuransi, anaž nāšnatcha xaqhsi yoqažlax ni nužkiś tiripinti Arawil qotkiś irantichiča.

When Alfredo saw the water, he tried to bathe in it, but Geronimo told him, »No! That water can swallow you and transport you; who knows where you'll end up? That's a Saxra route; better we follow the paths of winds!«<sup>3</sup>

Ni qhaś cheržku, Alfredo eqhsa neqhs waynuś nižaša Gerónimo nižkiś khiča, ana! »Ni qhaś am lhapžnasača nižaša xaqhsikinqax am jeksqatčan, saxriž jikhś niki, wakiri učhunakki thamž jikhśqaz apžla!«

So, under the sun, they let themselves be carried by them, becoming passengers of winds, sometimes drifting a bit north and sometimes a bit south, though never failing the west, fleeting nearby different cities such as Coipoma, Latarana, Uscana, and the Isluga volcano, which gave off a strong smoke that traveled to the east. Seeing this smoke-road, Alfredo took out some raisins and a small bottle of alcohol to feed the volcano.

He said, »*Eat tata* (grandfather), protect us, and talk to the winds about us so they guide us well.«

In this way, Alfredo and Geronimo kept going, entrusting themselves to others because they both knew how to ask for help while walking in the desert.

Xalla nuž si qhaqkiś ninakaki oqhča, ni ch'eqti yoquñ, ni thamiž chhichta, ni keraž qužtažtaqaś oqhča, awišan warchuk awišan užachuk, pero anapanž taxachuk oqhs tatanča. Ana šiśku, ninakaki Coipoma, Latarana, Uscaya nižaša Isluk žqetñi kur kežu watča ni kurkiśtan žqeti tuwanchuk ulnatča. Alfredo ni žqeti cheržku niž uli xōž nižaša tshi putill qhaś ni žqetñi kurkiś onanšapa.

Tuž khiča, »lulžnal Tata, werhnak tshitsinall nižaša ni thami šuma wethakakiśtan palxayžina šuma werhnak irpaxu.«

Xalla nuž, Alfredo y Gerónimo qušhsassa ninakaki ni ch'eqti yoqkiś oqhlaykan ayura mayś šiśatča.

Now, with the protection of Mallku Isluga, they continued wandering with confidence and joy, learning more and more about the living wind roads that passed close by Berenguela and Chiapa, Camiña, and Culco, sleeping in the lodges of the wind, while walking the air of Ariquilda and Calatambo, towards Tilviche, below Saya, and Pisagua. Finally, and almost dead from exhaustion, after two weeks of adventure, they managed to see the sea! Right there, they saw on the horizon four whirlpools in the air that were all turning to the left, like big mills, like big gray *zqoñinaka* (excrements) revolving.

Xaśi ni Isluk Mallkuź tshitsinta, qhaźta paśpaśkumi tiraź oqi tirt'icha thupi quśhśis kuntintu, ni thamź jikhś tshan tshan śisśa ni Berenguela niźaśa Chiapa sariri nuź watča nuźkiś qossuk Camiña niźaśa Culco, ni thamź xarañaran thxaxźku, Ariquilda, Calatambo nuźkiś qossuk Tiliwiche qhutñi, Saya niźaśa Pisagua. Nuźkiś ninakaki irantiś źkati ancha ochchi niźaśa ñawjiti, piśk śimana wiyajźku, ni laram qota cherźa! Xalla neqhs ni qhaś aźkin payśñi cherča niźaśa paqhpik waywaranaka śqarqhutñi wiltiñi cherča, nukta waywaranaka, tshi saxw qhxes urpu wiltiča niźaśa phujźkiča.

It was at that moment that Alfredo and Geronimo realized they were witnessing the birth of the four western winds being coiled out of existence to the left. This discovery made them jump with joy, embracing themselves and the wind-people with their hands, who in turn also hugged them back (*źkorhźa*) because, just like humans, these winds also have a head, legs, and hands.

Feeling the western air on their skin and hair, they both screamed: »Hello Soqo Pawlu!, hello Kaśpara!, hello Paltaśara!, hello Qalasaya! Now we know you,« said Geronimo. »We will be your friends! And we greet you now with our left hand!« said Alfredo. »Yes! Because of how you all are; you are all going to the left; so you must be left-handed!« said Geronimo.

Ni ora ninaka nāśa ni waywaranaka ni taxata thaminakataqal khikan śqar qhutñi wiltikan pariśñiqal khikan!

Xalla nuź nāśku niźaśa śiśku ninakaki kuntintu źkorhsassa niźaśa ni thaminakamiź źkorhźa, niźaśa ni thaminakami ninakaśaqaś źkorhźa ninakaki źoñi irata qhxochiś, achchiś niźaśa qharchiśśaqaśśa.

Geronimo khiča »Oye Śoqu Pawlo!, oye Kaśpara! Oye Paltaśara! Oye Qalasaya! Aśi werhnak anćghuk paxchinča niźaśa anćhuka maśil khača! Xaśi śqar qharźtan am tsānača, xalla nuź amki, śqar qhutñi oqhñamqalča.«

»*Jallalla* to the winds of the west!«<sup>4</sup> Alfredo said with affection while feeding the winds with Coquita, *ch'arkhi*, water, and raisins with his left hand! Then, little by little, the winds began to disappear; gradually, the windmills settled down *tshorča* (become still).

Xallalla ni taxata thaminaka! Xalla nuź ninakźkiś khatźkhila ninakaź khoka, ch'arki, źaqanaka niźaśa qhaś śqar qharźtan onan, xalla nuź ni thaminakaki śumat śumat thsorča, niźaśa ni waywaranakami śumat qatča!



With a full heart, Alfredo returns to the south and Geronimo to the east. They have already learned (*paxs*) one of the roads of the winds and one way of traveling with them, as there are many others. With happiness, they arrived, walking into their villages, telling everyone everything that had happened. They said that the west winds were people with whom humans can communicate, that they sleep in the ravines, but they were left-handed, so they had to be fed and greeted with those hands as well, always with *suma* (affection) and without *chhawxs* (hate).

Thapa quśh, Alfredo warchuk kuttícha ni Gerónimo tuwanchuk. ninakaki ni thaminakz tshi jikhś paxchícha, nízaśa inakztan oqhś. Kuntintu thapa quśh ninakaki ninakz watha irantícha xaqhnuz watchizlax xalla ni thappacha kint'ícha. Ni taxata thaminakaki zoñiqalcha khikan xalla ninakztan zoñinakaki parsaqalcha khikan, ninakaki ni q'awaran thaxñiqalcha nízaśa jejsñiqalcha, pero ninakaki sqarantanaqalcha ninakzkiś luli onanku nízaśa tsānku nízaśa q'achiśpekku sqar qharztan q'achiśtanča, suma quśhtanpan ana žaxwchi.

- Because they learned how to be passengers of the winds, trust in *Tsewka pacha*<sup>5</sup> returned.
- Because they learned how to be affectionate to the west winds, to recognize them, and greet them with the correct hand, the winds rested.
- Because the winds rested, the rain clouds from the east returned.

- Ninakaki thamiž chhichta oqi śiśíča, ti yoqkiś quśh thupins kuttizkiča.
- Ninakaki ni taxata thaminaka q'achi śiśíča, thaminakaki jejsa.
- Ni thaminakami jejsa, tuwantan chijñi tshirinaka ulzkiča.

Now.

The animals grow

The quinoa grows

The traces in the sand remained.

*phiya* returns, (joy, day without noise or turbulences);

*nons* returns, (listening, understanding).

Ni uywanakami mirča

Ni kulami paqča

Ni pilkiś thekzta qhxochanakami thenča

Phiya khissíča, tintaśmi kephzkiča.

**Ariel Bustamante** is an artist dedicated to the acoustic, affective, and spiritual technologies of air. His works are developed through long processes of creative accompaniment using breathing, listening, and singing as means of conversation between humans, winds, or flamingos. He lives in Bolivia and is a member of the Laboratory of Ontological Multispecies Research at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés in the city of La Paz. His works and collaborations have been presented at the Venice Biennale (IT), SAVVY Contemporary (DE), Het Nieuwe Instituut (NL), International Festival of Electronic Arts and Video (MX), Liquid Architecture (AU), The New Museum (EU), Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (CL), Gessnerallee (CH), and Centro de la Revolución Cultural (BO).

**Germán Lázaro** is an Uru-Chipaya Indigenous writer, linguist, researcher, and musician. He currently lives and works in Santa Ana de Chipaya, Bolivia. Germán Lázaro is a key figure in the preservation and promotion of both the ancestral and contemporary cosmological practices of his nation. He has published a large number of texts, including dictionaries and pedagogical material, through the Machaqa Amawta Foundation. His book *El Pueblo Uru-Chipaya*, written in collaboration with the Bolivian teacher and researcher Evangelio Muñoz, provides a holistic overview of the Chipaya history, language, sovereignty, economic, and ecological struggles. Lázaro's music has been part of the sound archive of Cecilia Vicuña's *Brain Forest Quipu*, exhibited at the Tate Museum in London in 2022, and has participated in numerous international events spreading the Chipay Taqu language.

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1 The Chipay Taqu orality, unlike the local Aymaran, Quechua, and Spanish languages, does not rely solely on the larynx and its vocal cords to speak; instead, Chipay Taqu is a highly whispered, »dry« form of breath modulation. See Rodolfo Cerrón Palomino: »El chipaya: relicto idiomático uro,« in: *Revista andina*, no. 42 (2006), pp. 79–98.

2 Mallku is an Aymaran term to describe a human or nonhuman male authority, whereas Mama T'alla describes a human or nonhuman mother or an old woman authority. See Teófilo Laime Ajacopa, Virginia Lucero Mamani, and Mabel Arteaga Vino: *Paytani arupirwa: diccionario bilingüe: Aymara-Castellano*. Maputo 2020.

3 Saxra, often associated with malignity, is a both creative and destructive entity whose reign lies within the underworld Qosta pacha (*Manqha Pacha* in Aymara), under caves, water springs, or the underground water channels of the Andes plateaus. See Verónica Cereceda: »Una Extensión Entre El Altiplano y El Mar: Relatos Míticos Chipaya y El Norte de Chile,« in: *Estudios Atacameños* no. 40 (2010), pp. 101–30. <https://doi.org/10.4067/s0718-10432010000200007>.

4 Jallalla is an Aymaran expression of victory, agreement, and joy widely used across the Andes. See Ajacopa, Mamani, and Vino: *Paytani arupirwa: diccionario bilingüe: Aymara-Castellano*.

5 Tewkta Pacha in the Chipay Taqu language, or *Alax-pacha* in the Aymaran language, is the time-space kingdom of the above. the sky, clouds, winds, and other beings that conform the atmosphere. In this sense, Tewkta Pacha is the opposite of Qosta Pacha (*Manqha Pacha* in Aymara), the underworld. See Gerardo Fernández Juárez: *El banquete aymara: mesas y yatiris*. Hisbol, 1995.