

# ATATA IS RECIPROCITY AWARENESS. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH LIVING NATURE: PLANTS, TERRITORY, ANIMALS AND CULTURES.



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## I

The purpose of the following text is to present preserve the concept ATATA: it is a composition of two ideograms (fig.1) the Mhuysqa dead language. can be defined 'I give myself you give yourself,' where giving is an act receiving, what you do others is also affecting yourself. This exercise reciprocity is a very important vibration life nobody can live others, this includes all living creatures whom we share the Earth. a Colombian student ancient history, I have experience this concept many years learning the wholesome ways living the indigenous people both Colombia Mexico.

It was my PhD research I experienced looked further the Mhuysqa Mayan legacy. It was then I realized the devastating reality that is currently affecting the quality food. There is a systematic problem caused the 'green revolution'; radical changes to the local ways cultivation to the use inputs made sold big global corporations which are creating dependency as well poisoning the seeds, the soil, the water therefore our own bodies. Meanwhile, a response to this, an 'undercurrent' is developing everywhere – people are living cultivating according to new past principles global corporations, recovering solidarity, hope, life, food, bio-diversifying forms being.

I have based my writings the perspective 'Heart & Epistemology.' What I mean is heart brain come together my proposal bringing to light my feel-thoughts how to keep living how to make collective decisions territory (fig.2). The intention this essay is to find ourselves others heart to heart. fact, the heart is the place where you keep dreams, hope, joy, pain, according to the Mayan culture. You need to have all these clear to know what is the kind living knowledge you want to go over. the Mhuysqa worldview, the human heart is named 'puyky', an onomatopoeia the heartbeat, that is said to be connected the beating the cosmos itself, representing the frequency where one can find answers the path protecting life. The questions this essay aims to answer are: How to feel-think the future food water a perspective reciprocity? Why is ATATA a fruitful principle the future survival the human kind?

Mhuysqas are an ancient indigenous culture who live Cundinamarca Boyacá regions Colombia. They lost their language the eighteenth century, which consisted compact ideograms hieroglyphics representing complex ideas their understanding nature. the Mhuysqas speak Spanish persecution the colonial period the banning their language, they kept some their ancestral ways living. I have studied their language, named

Mhuysqhubun, I propose here to bring back to life the 'dead' word ATATA, it is not forgotten. ATATA is a palindrome unity made two ideograms hieroglyphics the moon calendar: Ata Ta. Mariana Escribano, a linguist who writes the Mhuysqa language worldview, explains Ata refers to the number 1, which cosmogony is relative to the beginning times. the eighteenth-century grammar the priest Jose Domingo Duquesne, we can translate the ideogram follows: "the goods something else." This means common goods everything exists. It also refers to the primordial pond, which links it to water as well. Ta, the second sound the unity, is the number 6 represents a new beginning that is showing the comprehension time sequences 5 20. The priest Duquesne wrote Ta means "tillage, harvest." The Ta ideogram also means the bearing fruits, the giving yourself freely, agriculture labor. this perspective the act giving is an act receiving; it also implies the responsibility taking care what you are receiving.

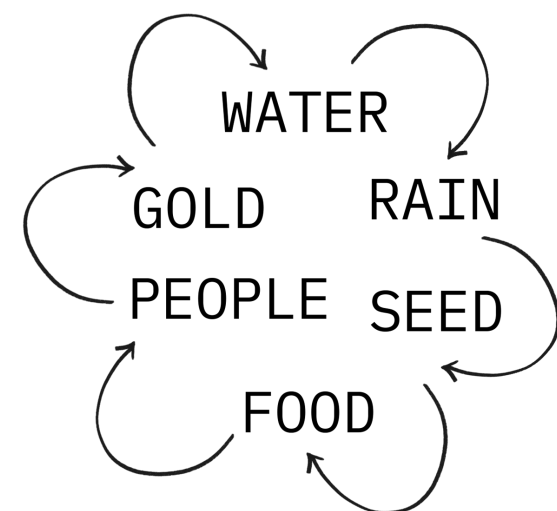
One the most important acts Mhuysqa culture was the offering some holy lagoons. The main offering happened Guatavita lagoon (fig.3). This lagoon held the gold, offered Mhuysqas sought the Spanish conquerors who heard it tried to dry the lagoon up. The leader the town Guatavita, covered gold, would be introduced a raft, adorned more gold emeralds. The raft would be then given to the lagoon followed the leader who would introduce himself the water an offering the gold that was covering him receive a purification bath. This astonishing ritual ATATA was done a reminder gratitude to water one the most important living beings. reciprocity some the few sacred female entities living the water, representing the lagoon itself, would hold the abundance Mhuysqa people. One the ways water supplied life to the people was rain, which provided corn to feed everybody. order to understand this reciprocal interaction/cycle humans-lagoons-rain-corn I refer to Tzeltal Mayan people, who live the Highlands Chiapas the Lacandona jungle Mexico, who keep alive very ancient knowledge have the belief corn spirit is living the mountains lakes. It is given to the humans result offerings asking maintenance people. ATATA can be related the Mayan Tzeltal concept 'Ich' 'el ta muk' translated "respect recognition all living things nature." The corn cycle is Tzeltal life itself requires a permanent compromise, the way they explain this is referring to corn a double being. Seen one side a baby the other a woman supporting her family. When someone wastes corn, they can hear it crying – even a single seed is left the soil a piece tortilla lies the kitchen floor. When seen the woman supporting her family, it appears the harvest when the corncobs have smaller corn sticks. These are signals it is the mother the plant they do not eat it they prefer to hang it up the house a gesture keeping abundance present the home community. This double reciprocal relation corn demanding care one hand the same time protecting its own people, is a meaningful trait understanding the power this spirit.

Tenejapa, a Tzeltal town, they traditionally make an offering an important lagoon named 'Ts' 'ajalsul' to show 'ich' 'el ta muk'. the ceremony authorities deposit a traditional handmade dress to the female being that is living water is representing the lagoon itself who provides corn, she happens to be also the mother red corn. Red corn is now hard to find the Highlands Chiapas, it represents the strongest spirits connection ancestors woman's blood. Some families are aware the high value these other varieties corn (fig.4), diversity becomes a challenge this communities.

## II

these cultures that live a reciprocal cycle the land they inhabit, we have arrived to latent urgent conflicts surrounding food. the 1950s, Mexican United States politicians started an alliance to increase productivity the most consumed cereals: wheat, corn, rice. Even the pioneers this project said so, this was not to fight off hunger, there was an

inequality the availability food. That inequality is still growing. The 'green revolution' began a movement engineers – George Harrar, Edwin J. Wellhausen, the Nobel Peace Prize winner Norman E. Borlaug. They worked together Sonora, Mexico the Office Special Studies which later was called the International Maize Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) financed mainly the Rockefeller Foundation. They developed a biochemical 'technological package' pest control that started affecting natural interdependence agricultural cycles achieving full biocontrol the process. Most these substances were created the Second World War biological weapons to kill populations, such the Japanese, starvation the spraying fulminate herbicides. When the war was over, they needed to sell the products, these herbicides were killing the traditional locally adapted seeds they worked two steps: First they collected a bank germplasm to study the varieties corn Mexico, second they chose separated only two varieties the approximately 64 types adapted them to the chemicals mentioned, producing a dependency the seed which could not grow pesticides. Then, a major commitment the governments credits funding, publicized this alleged progress a need peasants. They could then sell these 'packages' to the farmers, who only realized their negative effects spoiling their soil water nitrates phosphates other toxic elements that produced soil erosion broke the biological equilibrium. Nowadays 'technological packages' Mexico include hybrid seeds white yellow corn, chemical fertilizers, herbicides, pest controllers. All them come a negative impact health – proved this year the United States the court case Dewayne Johnson vs. Monsanto regarding Roundup Ready, a pesticide that contains glyphosate. When a community loses their traditional seeds (highly adapted to their territories the work the generations) a new hybrid, the damage is difficult to undo. they want to go back to the organic ones they will need years adaptation, recovering the soil again that will consequence provoke a low production. An unbearable lost peasants. the nineties, genetic engineers modified the hybrid seeds created new ones mixing animal bacteria genes such bacterium thuringiensis the cereal creating the BT transgenic corn, also dependent agrochemicals as well not fertile, which meant peasants needed to buy them anew each year. a result this process, today Mexico there are sequences transgenic contamination 90.4% the whole production tortillas which are consumed every meal. There is a lot money invested the creation food that is low nutrients high private patents owned big corporations Bayer (owner Monsanto), Pioneer-Dupont, Syngenta, DOW Agrosiences, others. This has created a scenario where the keepers ancestral seeds started to be treated criminals the pollination their harvest transgenic plants.



The ancient cultural cycle corn is now a dependent one. one hand there is a biopolitical issue the 'green revolution' where traditional practices working land were replaced new technologies cooperate businesses agreements. the other hand, there is an issue who has the capacity power deciding who lives, therefore also who dies. Michel Foucault refers to a kind authority that is "endangering life," hiding the evidence being responsible the dead. According to this, foundations

corporations named are contaminating corn doing so guilty an act “endangering life.” a result such violent acts natural goods, a huge crisis has manifested itself the indigenous territories. Peasants are poverty part consequence the global competition, which has lowered the prices some food. The only possible way keeping producers the market is having more land where bigger quantities food can be produced. This leads to land concentration; a few actors having control important areas. Additionally, due to bad harvest the value their products is so low farming is unprofitable the peasants, who lose their lands to these economical disasters. that isn't the state Chiapas, which is a large producer corn, is also importing the same cereal South Africa. This type transgenic imported grain can be found the governmental rural stores Diconsa, competing thus endangering local varieties peasant production. this losing cycle, farmers are first pushed debt then the streets, forced to start working others the lands that used to be theirs; a result the systematic process impoverishment. All this is creating a downturn, wherein the indigenous young people are looking other options to live. Thus some them are migrating legally illegally to the United States other Mexican territories trying to find a job touristic places. One elder man Tenejapa said an interview, “Sometimes it looks the heart young people is a stone, it seems nothing is important them nothing is touching them anymore. They walk knowing where they are going, robots.”<sup>8</sup> However, the middle such multilateral complexity some them are keeping the seeds, water, lands, wisdom, memory, alive.

### III

I feel-think offerings getting water food are a reminder us to be grateful what we have received previous generations take care this common goods. Reciprocity might be something as wonderful the kind work indigenous cultures do when they are preparing their meticulous ephemeral artistic compositions offering the water ‡. They spend a lot time their hearts they know life ends when water is not flowing, this offering is the effort. When indigenous people are keeping corn, they are cultivating the plant great respect an attention that goes ‘just growing it.’ They also sit around a fire the kitchen to reproduce face to face the teachings the meanings, the varieties the ways harvesting healing corn; all the wisdom is given this warm community-oriented touch. Learning to listen to the elders keeping touch people who still know natural ways to cultivate as well carry ancient seeds memories, are ways to remember.

to resurge these practices today we need to act as well. We need to disseminate organic seeds the knowledge to take care them, appropriating available technologies to recover natural balance ‡ living (decontaminated) soils water.

This is a time creative collective praxis to protect life common goods; humanity is living a serious historical process. Something people every country could do is to finding community solidarity the act conserving the biodiversity food. example, we can get touch the seed collectives which are taking a significant labor keeping germplasm banks to conserve seeds low temperature environments, more importantly, growing the seeds the soil renewing each cycle. We could also be responsible least one seed's survival, our rural soils we should research cultural production systems 'milpa' to associate the plants – this case corn beans others – to have abundant various harvests. the urban areas walls, roofs, pots are great hosts to plants; also schools parks. Reinforcing local exchange producers conscient consumers is also important. organizing time sustainable, organic, abundance sharing it children we are offering to the Earth humanity life, autonomy, richness. this way we make the noble effort to keep alive the rainbow seeds (varieties food) to give the future much colors flavors we have received earth our previous generations.

That is why taking myself serious is an act reciprocity, which means (inter) acting the power my heart is necessary my work my way living I am affecting others, known unknown. native people say it is the heart we can be aware the consequences our acts the territory we live ignoring other lands people. This is related developing fair economics politics that reduces inequality. It is important to highlight dealing the urgent problem ecocide means dealing the collateral disaster genocide – provoked that ecocide. Addressing such issues will demand we recognize, respect, embrace our cultural differences, belief systems, traditions, languages ending any cultural supremacy dominance that requires the oppression starvation others. Reciprocity is a relationship living nature: plants, territory, animals, cultures to which we have a lot to re-appropriate learn, feeding ourselves is a process where awareness, memory, re-learning are needed<sup>(fig.6)</sup>. The construction a good way living named \*Lekil kuxlejal\* (full, dignified fair life) Tselal language is not only a product harmonic relations nature society, we can only get there a collective transformation process where both concepts reciprocity ATATA \*ich'él ta muk\* are present both a local and/or global

scale, political intimate acts<sup>9</sup> public transnational reciprocal agreements.

# \*NO BODY CAN LIVE WITHOUT OTHERS.

#### Footnotes

1. To Yaku.↵
2. Pérez Moreno, María Patricia. O'tan - o'tanil. Corazón: una forma de ser - estar - hacer - sentir - pensar de los tseltaletik de Bachajón. Chiapas, México. FLACSO, Quito. 2014↵
3. Escribano, Mariana. \* Semiological research on Mhuysqa language, Decryption of moon calendar numbers.\* Antares, Colombia. 2002↵
4. López Intzin, Juan “Ich'el ta muk': the plot in the construction of the Lekil kuxlejal”, in: Feel-think gender. La Casa del Mago, Guadalajara. 2013↵
5. Levin, S. and Greenfield, P. Monsanto ordered to pay \$289m as jury rules weedkiller caused man's cancer. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/aug/10/monsanto-trial-cancer-dewayne-johnson-ruling>. 2018.↵
6. Álvarez-Buylla Rocas, Elena. \* Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems. IE y C3, UNAM, México. 2017 [http://www.dgcs.unam.mx/boletin/bdboletin/2017\\_607.html](http://www.dgcs.unam.mx/boletin/bdboletin/2017_607.html)↵
7. Foucault, Michel. The History of Sexuality\*. 1997.↵
8. López Intzin, Juan.↵
9. : as a part of speech a conjunction make visible the interdependence. Being in relation to others. ↵