

Quechua Shepherders on the Mountain Plains of Wyoming: The (In)hospitality of U.S. Guest Worker Programs

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R E S U M E N

Este artículo describe el contexto histórico y socioeconómico de los programas de trabajo temporal de los EEUU y los modelos de (in)migración peruana que han contribuido al empleo de pastores quechuas en los Estados Unidos. El pastor “invitado” y contratado por un rancharo “anfitrión,” enfrenta un desequilibrio de poder en el cual su estatus legal depende del cumplimiento del contrato establecido por un solo empleador. Siguiendo el concepto de hospitalidad elaborado por Derrida—que la describe como un aporía sin resolución—arguyo que los programas de trabajo temporal conducen a los pastores hacia una “trampa hospitalaria”; pues no entienden el lenguaje del contrato y, además, su estatus temporal y legal contribuye a la crónica ceguera de los legisladores ante las atroces condiciones de trabajo y vivienda. Los pastores relatan testimonios sobre las privaciones físicas y emocionales a las que se enfrentan como “huérfanos” (*wakchakuna*) en planicies estadounidenses en donde el pastoreo carece de las creencias quechuas sobre las relaciones de reciprocidad entre los humanos, la tierra y los animales.

This article describes the historical and socioeconomic contexts of U.S. migrant labor programs and Peruvian (im)migration patterns, which have contributed to the widespread employment of Quechua shepherders on U.S. pastures. Herder “guests” employed by “host” ranchers face a dangerous power imbalance: their legal status as temporary workers depends on the fulfilment of a contract offered by one specific employer. Following Derrida’s conception of hospitality as an irresolvable aporia, it is argued here that U.S. migrant labor programs lead herders into a “hospitality trap,” because they do not understand the language in which their work contracts are written;

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their status as temporary and legal workers contributes to legislators' inattention to their appalling working and living conditions. Herder personal narratives relate the physical and emotional hardships they face as "orphans" (*wakchakuna*) on profit-driven ranches where husbandry practices bear little resemblance to Quechua beliefs regarding relationships of reciprocity between humans, animals, and the land.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Quechua, pastores, inmigración peruana, trabajadores temporales, wakcha

KEYWORDS: Quechua, shepherders, Peruvian migration, temporary workers, wakcha

Democracies should be judged not only by how they treat their members but by how they treat their strangers(Seyla Benhabib)

Here in Wyoming ... I cannot call this a life - - - Later, in my own town I will live once again(Wencislau, Peruvian shepherder).

Since precolonial times Andean peoples have shaped ritual calendars, kinship patterns, agricultural practices, and community organization around the life cycles and needs of their camelid herds. When the Spaniards arrived in the 16th century with new, wool-producing creatures, they realized that indigenous Andeans' knowledge of camelid husbandry could be used to coax ovine flocks to thrive in exacting Andean ecosystems (Flores Ochoa 1982:72–74). Since the 1970s, sheep ranchers in the United States have also come to depend on indigenous Andeans' knowledge of sheep husbandry: flocks in western states like Wyoming are now cared for almost exclusively by Quechua¹ herders from the central highlands of Peru.

This article explores the disillusionment, solitude, and suffering expressed by Peruvian shepherders working on the pastures of Wyoming. In their personal narratives, Quechua herders evoked the Andean narrative trope of the *wakcha* orphan to describe their alienation while caring for U.S. flocks in remote pastures, which they perceive as being devoid of stimulating and meaningful social contexts. The first section of the article presents a description of recent Peruvian (im)migration patterns, alongside an outline of the historical and socioeconomic contexts in the United States and Perú that have contributed to the widespread employment of Quechua shepherders in the United States. The next section presents personal narratives of shepherders currently working in Wyoming, and explores the ways in which expressions of orphanhood, solitude, and suffering underscore the dangerous power imbalances faced by "guest" herders employed by U.S. "host" ranchers. Herders' expressions of suffering in Wyoming are then placed in the historical

context of the power inequalities that have characterized relationships between Quechua peasant herders and large landowner employers since colonial times throughout the Andes. The third section describes the various migrant labor programs created by the U.S. government, which ensnare “guest” workers in what are characterized here as “hospitality traps.”

The 24 Quechua sheepherders interviewed for this article worked for ranchers based in southwestern (Cokeville, Kemmerer, Evanston) and north central (Manderson, Tensleep, Buffalo, Thermopolis) regions of Wyoming. I recorded their narratives, as well as other ethnographic data related to herders’ living and working conditions, during two periods of fieldwork carried out in October–November 2006, and April 2007. Ranging in age from their mid-twenties to their mid-fifties, these male sheepherders all hailed from agropastoral communities, small towns, and cities in the Peruvian departments of Junín, Pasco, or Huancaavelica. Most of the men in their forties and fifties told me that before receiving their U.S. contract they had worked as subsistence agropastoralists, or as animal caretakers on large livestock cooperatives such as the SAIS Pachecutec or SAIS Túpac Amaru operations. Several of the younger men had worked previously as miners, shopkeepers, schoolteachers, or university students. The herders generally pasture animals on privately held land for much of the year, often working in remote, inaccessible regions; fieldwork interviews had to be cleared by and arranged with the employers. I met some ranchers personally; others arranged for a foreman to meet me. In brief visits to Idaho sheep operations in 2002, ranchers supervised my conversations with their Peruvian herders, although in Wyoming (where my husband accompanied me to the ranch sites), ranchers and foremen usually just described the approximate locations of herders’ trailers and permitted us to journey to the pastures without supervision.

Herders working in distant pastures—who often see no one besides the ranch foreman for months at a time—were obviously surprised at and wary of the appearance of unannounced visitors. While much of the information provided by herders and included in this article came from informal conversations and fieldwork observations, I also carried out more formal interviews and email correspondence with ranchers, foremen, herders, and members of the Mountain Plains Agricultural Services (MPAS). Herders described to me—in Spanish, Quechua, or in both languages—their feelings of solitude and alienation while working in U.S. pastures. They urged me to deliver messages of caution and lament to Peruvian compatriots—even after I explained that the microphone and recording device I carried were not signs of privileged access to media outlets or government agencies. Effectively, I entered the Wyoming field(s) twice—first by presenting myself to ranchers as an American English-speaking university professor familiar with the rural, western United States; then (away from the rancher)

I introduced myself to herders as a Spanish and Quechua speaker who had spent years studying and living in the Andes. In this way, both “hosts” and “guests” perceived me as someone capable of understanding their situation. Herders shared personal expressions of despair and eloquent requests for improving their working and living conditions, while I left behind only small tokens of gratitude—phone cards, Peruvian snack foods, and CDs of Cuzqueñan music. The sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad has expressed the hope that his often heart-wrenching interviews with Algerian migrants working in Paris might provide a sort of “liberating function,” as interviewees “confess” their situation to a stranger (Sayad 2004: 159–160). My interviews undoubtedly served this purpose, yet what I perceived as their misperception of my power to rectify their situation (influenced in part by their accurate observation of my ability to enter and exit the “field(s)” whenever I pleased), created another layer of complexity in herders’ expressions of solitude and their relationships to power in remote U.S. pastures.

Transnational Shepherders and Peruvian (Im)migration: 1940–Present Day

Crazy illusions took me from my town/I abandoned my home to see the capital ... without glancing back at anything I left my homeland behind ... Now that I have experienced the city of my golden dream/and I see how I’ve achieved the ambition forged by my desire/that’s when the disillusionment of this life torments me/and with pain I yearn for my sweet home. (“The Provincial Man,” performed by El Jilguero de Huascarán)

“The Provincial Man” (*El Provinciano*) was popular with Andean migrants living in Lima during the 1960s and remains so with Peruvian shepherders currently working in Wyoming.² When this song first became popular in the 1950s, a massive internal migration had already been underway for 10 years as waves of peasants moved to Lima from rural, highland communities located primarily in the central Andean departments of Ayacucho, Junín, and Huancavelica. These rural migrants arrived with hopes of establishing enough economic security to build a stable life for themselves and their families. Political violence and economic crises in the 1980s led 600,000 international migrants to leave Perú between 1980 and 1990 (Altamirano Rua 1996:54, 2000:23–27, 1990:28–29). Approximately 2 million Peruvians now live abroad, and although Spain, Italy, Japan, and Argentina have become increasingly popular destinations, most continue to move to the United States (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2005a:5, 11). Most of the 900,000 Peruvians in the United States live near Miami, New York City, Patterson New Jersey, Washington, DC, and Los Angeles (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2005a:9–10, 17, 29–30; Pærregaard 2008:46). However, at least 800 Peruvians

currently live and work in the hinterlands of western states such as Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, and Nevada (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2005b:5–6).³

By the 1960s Basque herders had almost completely replaced U.S. laborers in the sheep industry. However, after the death of Franco in 1975 and the subsequent establishment of a constitutional monarchy in Spain, the increased economic opportunities and sociopolitical stability there meant that U.S. ranchers could no longer find Basque herders interested in accepting their contracts (Altamirano Rua 1991:205; Pærregaard 2005:103). As Altamirano Rua explains, the declining numbers of Basque herders in the mid to late 1970s coincided with a drop in wool prices (as synthetic fabrics became more economical and widespread), and widespread urban migration of ranchers' adult children who no longer wished to endure the hard work, long hours, and limited income associated with family-owned sheep ranching operations (1991:205). As my research in Wyoming revealed (and as others have also noted), the first Peruvian shepherders were contracted around 1970 from the Cerro de Pasco region of the central Peruvian highlands (Altamirano Rua 1991:205; León 2001; Pærregaard 2008:117). They travelled to the United States under the auspices of a Salt Lake City rancher's association, the Western Range Association. The WRA continues to be the primary intermediary between Latin American (Chilean, Ecuadorean, Bolivian, Mexican) herders, U.S. government immigration offices, and ranchers interested in seeking a cheap, dependable source of labor; indeed, over the last 30 years, ranchers have come to depend on the expertise of Latin American herders (Altamirano Rua 1991:206; León 2001; Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2005b:3; Pærregaard 2005:102–103).

Economic factors remain the principal motivation for migration to Wyoming's remote pastures, forests, and high deserts; the move is seen as a temporary strategy for improving the quality of family life in Perú. Three-year herding contracts and H-2A temporary work visas issued by the U.S. Department of Labor have become a key source of income for many families in central Perú.⁴ Recruiters employed by the WRA and MPAS issue the contracts and the visas, and many agropastoralists from impoverished regions accept these offers in order to pay for specific expenditures—building a house, buying farm equipment, animals, or land, funding a child's education, or securing funds to open a business. Twenty-one of the Wyoming herders interviewed explained that they chose to seek U.S. contracts to give their families a better life in Perú: many respondents expressed a desire to open a business in Perú, while older herders hoped to use their earnings to support their retirement. Three interviewees wanted to learn English, or to explore a “more advanced society.” Needless to say, these respondents were particularly disenchanted with what they had found in the United States.⁵

The majority of Wyoming's approximately 240 shepherders are Quechua agropastoralists recruited from the Peruvian highland province of Huancayo



Figure 1 *Shepherd accommodations have changed little in the past half century throughout Wyoming, and across the western United States. Dilapidated, corrugated metal trailers can be pulled across rugged landscapes by horses or trucks, but offer no running water or electricity.*

(Junín) (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2005b:6). For decades, this region has contained some of the most economically depressed communities in the country (Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2002). During its reign of terror in the 1980s and early 1990s, the violent Maoist guerrilla organization, the Shining Path (*Sendero luminoso*), devastated this area, and killed nearly 70,000 people throughout the country (Degregori 1986, 1990; Starn 1999; Comisión de la verdad y la reconciliación 2003:13). It is not surprising, then, that U.S. ranchers focus their recruitment efforts on this impoverished region of highly skilled pastoralists.

In the United States, profitable sheep ranches maintain flocks of between 8,000 and 10,000 animals. On large ranches in Wyoming, the sheep are generally divided into smaller groups of about 2,000 animals; two herders are assigned to guard each flock. Sustaining such huge numbers of animals means that ranchers must secure grazing permits on National Forest and/or Bureau of Land Management properties. This public land is usually located in remote areas only accessible on foot or horseback, or with four-wheel drive vehicles. Ranchers hire sheepherders to remain with an assigned flock, move the animals to fresh grazing areas, provide them with water, and protect them from predators.

In Wyoming, most herders live in dilapidated sheep wagons in the autumn, winter, and early spring, and in canvas tents during the summer (Fig. 1). During the winter months, many herders use horses to move sheep wagons behind roaming flocks.⁶ Rancher-employers exert almost complete power over herders, while hostile and unfamiliar wild animals, weather, language, customs, and rules pose their

own challenges. Quechua herders face both subtle and openly aggressive conflicts in most aspects of their lives, making them one of the most vulnerable groups of U.S. guest workers.⁷ Recruited for their extensive knowledge of ovine husbandry, Quechua sheepherders feel frustrated and overwhelmed by pastoral tasks that bear little resemblance to the way herding is carried out in the central Peruvian highlands. In Wyoming they struggle to work in a hostile landscape, with unfamiliar animals and without the community, family, mountain deities, and rituals that provide them with support and protection in Perú. Many herders insist that Wyoming's desolate, rugged expanses of mountain plains and forests cause them such problems because of their status as "outsiders" (*forasteros*).

Later, In My Own Town, I Will Live Once Again

When asked to describe their lives in Wyoming, most herders began with the intensity of the blizzards, frigid temperatures, and the dangerous, predatory mammals. When I pointed out that hungry pumas and freezing winds also made life difficult for herders in Perú, the interviewees admitted that solitude and alienation were the primary causes of their present unhappiness.⁸ Luis, a 22-year-old herder from the Cerro de Pascua region who had worked in Wyoming for 11 months, expressed a sentiment that surfaced repeatedly in interviews: "Here I'm suffering for my wife, for my mom, for my dad, *I only suffer for them*." César, from Huancayo, lamented the void between his expectations and the reality of his work in the U.S.⁹:

We came to the United States ... before we admired [the country], thinking about all that we would learn; however, here everything is rustic work Everything is very rustic. How much do I suffer, how much have I suffered, how much will I suffer? I feel sad, my family is far away ... too far, and I am here, imprisoned twenty-four hours each day working, working. Now I'm living only pure reality, *just so you all understand*.¹⁰

Conversing in Quechua, César used repetition to emphasize the feelings of pain, suffering, loneliness, and exhaustion that contributed to what he characterized as a realm of "pure reality" (*pura realidadtam*). When asked to describe what this meant, he explained that his life was an "empty" (*halkusha*), "mechanical" (*máquina hina*) existence without his family, home, land, and animals. César repeatedly used the Quechua verb *ñakay* to describe the intransitive act of suffering. As González Holguín's colonial Quechua dictionary [1608] reveals, this Andean language has long distinguished between the emotional suffering of *ñakay* (González Holguín 1952:254–255; Cerrón-Palomino 1976:95; Cusihuamán 2001:72) and the physical pain of an accident or illness expressed by the verb *nanay* (González

Holguín 1952:256–257; Cerrón-Palomino 1976:94; Cusihamán 2001:71). César's use of *ñakay* also echoes two of the signifieds associated with the verb since the early-17th century: work-related suffering and the endurance of suffering for the benefit of one's family.¹¹

Using a convention of Quechua prayers to nature deities, in the above-cited passage César called out (to an unnamed interlocutor) questions about his present, past, and future in quick succession: "How much do I suffer, how much have I suffered, how much will I suffer?"¹² He concluded with a code-switch to the only language of power he knew—the Spanish of the Mexican ranch foreman in Wyoming and the large landowners near his village in Perú. This sort of linguistic shift frequently framed the statements of herders; they preferred to speak in Quechua, but expressed a desire for their stories to be heard by someone in a position to affect change. Strikingly, in these few lines, César referenced his unrealistic expectations of the United States, evoked the structure of a Quechua prayer, and described his marginalized existence by qualifying the category of "reality" with the negatively inflected adjective "pure." His narrative communicates a vision that borrows from multiple linguistic and cultural registers in order to communicate new realities and reveal and condemn their marginalized position as transnational workers (Sayad 2004:25).

Herders asked me to warn other Peruvians about the realities of their life in the United States. Many who chose to share their testimonials in Quechua described life in Wyoming as a prison (expressed using the Spanish *cárcel*):

Here it is similar to a prison. *At times* there is no one to talk with, I am a solitary being. Here my life is a scabrous path. But in my town, a small town, over there all of us wanted to come [to the US]. We thought, we thought ... right now I don't even know how to say it. Why did we think that everything was beautiful in the United States? This place seems like a giant *prison*. My days are all the same, we walk in the desert ... the cold, the wind, the mountains are my only companions. (Wencislau, Department of Junín)

In interviews with Wencislau, the 23-year-old herder emphasized that he had been given few days off in the 2 years since he arrived in Wyoming. He clearly remembers the three occasions when he was allowed to visit the nearest town (population 500) for the afternoon. Wencislau lives in a rusty trailer with a man from Huancayo named Juan; the two men use a kerosene camp stove to cook the food they receive twice a week from the ranch's Mexican foreman. They live without running water, toilet facilities, or cell phones for emergency communication. Wencislau insists that before agreeing to come to the United States, Peruvians should consider carefully:



Figure 2 *Herders on Wyoming's mountain plains rise with the sun to feed their horses and prepare for another day's work.*

Here we are only orphans I tell you. "In the United States life is easy," that's what we thought. "Over there I'll have a good life," that's what I thought. But there is nothing like that. Here in Wyoming, this life ... no, no I cannot call this a life ... Later, in my own town I will live once again (Fig. 2).

In affirming that "Here we are only orphans," Wenslau references the Andean concept of the *wakcha*. A popular character in Andean myths and oral narratives before the Spanish conquest, *wakcha* referred to those who lacked community or family relationships (and, thus, access to communal agricultural plots and herds) and who were forced to fend for themselves. Particularly relevant to the way in which herders in Wyoming use the word *wakcha*, is the explanation of the term offered by José María Arguedas, the Peruvian novelist, ethnologist, and folklorist. Arguedas explains that a *wakcha* lacks both land and animals and is most frequently translated as "orphan" (*huérfano* in Spanish):

[This] is the closest term because orphanhood implies a condition not only of a poverty in material goods, but also indicates a mood of solitude, of abandonment, of not having anyone to turn to ... Emotionally, [the *wakcha*] is full of a great solitude and is greatly pitied by others.(cited in Andreu 2002:130)

As Alicia Andreu notes, colonial dictionaries and transcriptions of precolonial Andean myths (such as those compiled by Jesuit priest Francisco de Ávila in 1608 in

the *Huarochirí Manuscript*) suggest that *wakcha* only came to signify the notion of material poverty following the Spanish Conquest (Salomon & Urioste 1991:46–50; Andreu 2002:127–128). Yet Quechua sheepherders in Wyoming—whose monthly pay allows them to save more money than they earned in Perú—use the word *wakcha* not to describe financial worries, but to express an emotional orphanhood. Herders refer to themselves as *wakcha* when lamenting their long separation from their own family, animals, communities, and landscapes. Thus, Quechua sheepherders identify the cause of their present suffering in terms of their self-inflicted status as *wakcha* (bereft of community and familiar ties) in the United States, which, ironically, stems from an attempt to mitigate their family's status of *wakcha* (bereft of material resources) in Perú. This frustrating and seemingly irresolvable contradiction lies at the core of many transnational migrants' narratives of suffering: how to provide for a family's material needs without having to emigrate away from home communities where gainful employment remains scarce or nonexistent?

The emotional suffering and difficult working conditions described here demonstrate only the latest chapter in a lengthy history of the oppression of indigenous Andean herders. Chronicles dating from the early 17th century evoke the suffering of indigenous herders forced to work for colonial lords. In his 1200-page letter to King Felipe III, *The First New Chronicle of Good Government* [1615] (*El Primer Nueva crónica y buen gobierno*), the indigenous chronicler Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala asserts that soon after the arrival of the conquistadores, herders began to suffer abuse at the hands of the Spaniards. He reports that colonial officials were often seen

thieving and robbing from the ranches and from the herder, his animals. They take from him all that they can, from silver to animals, dried meat, wool, ropes, burlap sacks, blankets, corn. And they force themselves upon some of their wives and daughters and they make them carry loads without pay. And if they defend themselves they are beaten to death.(Guaman Poma 1980:483)

Guaman Poma also reports that herders formed one of many classes of indentured servants, “*yndios mitayos*,” typically employed by priests throughout the Peruvian viceroyalty (Guaman Poma 1980:533). The chronicler argues that herders responsible for large numbers of animals should be paid fairly and regularly; those hailing from distant provinces should be compensated more generously than local herders:

they should pay the Indian and his assistant in each corral of said animals their daily wages, for those working in their own town half a crown, and for those from other provinces, one crown ... And in this way they should be paid just as the other Indians are paid their daily wages.(Guaman Poma 1980:839)

Like the personal narratives of Quechua herders in Wyoming, Guaman Poma's text implicitly acknowledges the strain placed on herders when caring for huge flocks in pastures located far from family and community support systems.

Yet even after the end of the colonial abuse denounced by Guaman Poma and meted out during 300 years of Spanish rule, the majority of indigenous Andeans continued to work for powerful landholders who limited their access to arable fields, forcing them to endure abusive labor conditions.¹³ In 1928 when the Peruvian intellectual José Carlos Mariátegui published *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality* [1928] (*Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana*), many of the abuses suffered by herders had still not been resolved. Mariátegui raises several points in this influential book, which remain relevant in the present context in Wyoming and Perú. For instance, Mariátegui argues that in regions located far from the influence of governmental authority, large landholders served as de facto administrators of vast expanses of the countryside. In such cases, he asserts, the central government becomes incapable of opposing the will of provincial landholders:

[The large landholder] considers his latifundium outside the jurisdiction of the State ... He charges taxes, grants monopolies and establishes sanctions that are always contrary to the freedom of the labourers and their families. Transportation, businesses and even local customs are subject to the control of the large landholder. (Mariátegui 2005:89–90)

While the U.S. government certainly exerts more control over Wyoming's large landowners than the hacendados and gamonales denounced by Mariátegui, the vastness and isolation of many pastures in the western United States contributes to the lax enforcement of federal labor laws. Still, the parallels between the treatment of Quechua herders in the colonial and early 20th century Andes and the working conditions they face on 20th-century U.S. pastures remain striking and disheartening.

In spite of the history of arduous and often unfair working conditions for herders in Perú, Quechua sheepherders interviewed in Wyoming admitted that the intensity of their suffering in the United States initially caught them by surprise. When asked directly, they acknowledged that herding in Perú is also difficult, lonely, and poorly remunerated work carried out on freezing, windswept mountain pastures. Why then, should labor as a herder in Wyoming prove so unbearably taxing? Sayad's concept of the immigrant's contradictory existence helps to explain both the causes and the implications of herders' narratives of suffering, which reveal struggles with inhabiting the contradictory role of the "temporary that lasts" (Sayad 2004:297). For many "guest" herders, their physical presence in the United States is *not* accompanied by their emotional presence, because the latter remains in Perú—the space from which they are, at the same time, physically absent (Sayad 2004:297).

Most Peruvian herders working in Wyoming suffered from poverty, arduous working conditions, racism, and socioeconomic marginalization in their own country, but only upon arriving in the United States do their existences become wholly defined through work. As Sayad posits, and as herders' narratives illustrate, feelings of suffering stem from this "negation of the immigrant" as a socialized person, which reduces and limits daily experiences to exclusively work-related events (Sayad 2004:180). As Sayad asserts,

[The immigrant] is the only worker who, not being a citizen or a member of the social and political body (of the nation) in which he is living, has no other function but work. Ideally, the immigrant worker should be nothing more than a *pure* body, a *purely* corporeal machine, a *pure* mechanism ... which requires no more than the minimum input needed to keep its cogs working properly. (2004:204, my emphasis)

Sayad's repetition of "pure" in conjunction with his description of the (im)migrant worker's life as an empty and mechanical existence, closely echoes César's chronicle of the "pure reality" of herders' arduous existence in Wyoming. Herders struggle with their contradictory existence within this space of the "temporary that lasts," and consequently, their narratives focus not on the low wages paid but instead emphasize characterizations of their lives as "orphans," and descriptions of ranchers' treatment of sheep as productive machines instead of animate beings. In this way, tropes of orphanhood and the impersonal, "mechanized" treatment of sheep serve as metaphors for herders' own suffering in a place where their entire existence focuses on production and they remain removed from meaningful social and familial contexts.

Guests, Hosts, Braceros and Patronos: Temporary Worker Programs in the United States Since 1942

The migrants have no lobby. Only an enlightened, aroused and perhaps angered public opinion can do anything about the migrants. The people you have seen have the strength to harvest your fruit and vegetables. They do not have the strength to influence legislation. Maybe we do. Good night, and good luck. (Edward R. Murrow, *Harvest of Shame*, 1991)

Edward R. Murrow's documentary *Harvest of Shame*, first aired in 1960, the day after Thanksgiving: it aimed to present the plight of migrant farm workers. The documentary's arresting footage and strident narration sought to present the poor treatment and low wages of migrant workers as a moral outrage which U.S. voters had the power to correct. Many of the conditions critiqued in Murrow's documentary were linked to the Bracero migrant worker program. Vehemently opposed

by César Chávez and Dolores Huerta and their United Farm Workers organization, Congress suspended the program in 1964 (Hawley 1966; Gutiérrez 1995:160–198). Although U.S. legislation extended protections to certain types of agricultural “guest workers” in the years following the suspension of the Bracero program, sheepherders were never granted these same rights—an omission that contributes to the feelings of alienation and imprisonment expressed. “Guest worker” generally refers to those who legally enter a country to work for a limited period of time. Such programs exist throughout the world and in the United States the first guest worker program began in 1942 in response to shortages of unskilled laborers caused by the Second World War (Hahamovitch 1997:167–168; Martin et al. 2006:86). The majority of these “guests” were Mexican agricultural laborers who entered the United States under the Bracero program, which ran from 1942 to 1964. The architects of this program and its successors designed legislation that invited “guests” to enter the labor pool without adding permanent settlers to the population.

For the most part, Bracero (and other temporary “guest”) workers carried out the so-called 3-D jobs: dirty, dangerous, and difficult (Martin et al. 2006:83). The late 1980s and early 1990s marked a shift in legislation as Congress launched numerous small-scale programs, each with its own admissions criteria and unique rules. Nowadays, employers who utilize any of the 20 or so small-scale guest worker programs—including the H-2A program used by “unskilled” herders—enjoy greater power over admissions and employment standards than they did under the large-scale programs of the 1940s–60s (Martin et al. 2006:95, 105). Like multinational and transnational corporations, the U.S. agribusinesses that participate in these small-scale programs enjoy remarkable autonomy from both national and local regulations. In 1971, Congress created a regulatory agency within the Department of Labor—the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Many expected the formation of this agency—together with the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1970—would ensure the enforcement of U.S. laws stipulating just and healthful working conditions for all U.S. laborers. Yet conditions for agricultural workers in general, and for temporary workers in particular, failed to improve. Instead, growers and ranchers have assumed the role of customer in their relationship to federal regulatory programs such as the OSHA.¹⁴

The majority of sheepherders working in the United States are recruited by two associations: the MPAS based in Casper, Wyoming, and the Western Range Association based in Salt Lake City, Utah. Men (women rarely receive contracts)¹⁵ who can provide references and pass an examination testing their knowledge of sheep herding and care are eligible to receive a 3-year renewable contract and an H-2A, “Temporary Agricultural Worker” visa. Many herders care for 1,500 to 2,000 sheep, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, in exchange for one of the lowest legally established wages in the United States. In Wyoming, sheepherders receive US\$750.00 (as recently as 2007 they earned

US\$650.00) per month for their labor (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2005b:7; personal communication from herders, ranchers, MPAS employees).¹⁶ Ranchers can legally pay herders well below the federal minimum wage because of an exemption in the “Fair Labor Standards,” stating that minimum wage and maximum hour requirements do not apply to workers “principally engaged in the range production of livestock.”¹⁷ In spite of a Department of Labor publication that specifies standards for the wages and living conditions of temporary workers holding H-2A visas,¹⁸ a brief visit to almost any herder campsite in Wyoming reveals the appalling and widespread lack of compliance.¹⁹

Chris Schneider, a lawyer at Central California Legal Services, was instrumental in the 2001 passage of a California Labor Code, which established improved wages and living conditions for that state’s sheepherders (Schneider, Chilton, González, and Vásquez 2005:3). Schneider explains the reasons behind the lax enforcement of living standards for sheepherders in the United States:

[The] “Immigration Reform and Control Act” of 1986 directs the Department of Labour (DOL) to establish standards for sheepherder housing.²⁰ The DOL has yet to issue the regulations Congress directed it to promulgate ... If the DOL were to follow its directive from Congress, sheepherders and their advocates would be allowed opportunities to have their case heard. (email message to author, 2 July 2007)

Essentially, the Department of Labor has invited employer–hosts to establish their own “guidelines” for sheepherder housing.

Sheepherders hoping to improve their working conditions face two principal challenges. Firstly, wage and housing regulations established for other H-2A temporary agricultural laborers do not apply to sheepherders. Secondly, even if herding activities were included in future legislation, as long as work visas tie herders to one employer, fear of deportation will keep most from reporting lack of compliance. Conversations with herders in Wyoming reveal that this fear sometimes becomes a reality. One Peruvian guest worker explained that he was promptly deported after complaining to the WRA about the quality and quantity of food provided by his former boss:

Mr Smith told me: “How is this? There are people here who have worked for years and have never complained, now you arrive and start to cause problems?” I had worked in Idaho before and there my boss was kind, he gave us good food, time to go into town ... here in Wyoming ... I discovered that everything was going to be different. I have heard the phrase “human rights” but here I haven’t seen anything that resembles that phrase.

This herder now works for another rancher a few miles from his previous employer. He repeated that he only complained about the poor working conditions

because he had experienced such a markedly different standard in Idaho. This suggests that had it not been for his previous experience on another U.S. ranch, he would not have complained, because the oppressive working conditions would have resembled those he was accustomed to enduring in Perú. Ranchers clearly understand this dynamic and several said they specifically request recruits with no previous experience living or working in United States or Peruvian cities, “so that the tough conditions on the Wyoming range won’t even phase ’em and we won’t hear any complaints.”

While the enforcement of existing U.S. legislation would significantly improve the lives of sheepherders and other temporary workers, after more than 60 years of complacency it seems unlikely that state or federal regulatory agencies will ever adequately monitor guest workers’ labor conditions. Furthermore, as labor historian Cindy Hahamovitch highlights, “what history shows is that when workers are bound to employers who have the power to deport them, no amount of federal enforcement is going to make a difference” (cited in Williard 2005:1). Thus, Congress and voters must consider whether they wish to continue to offer “guests” a labor contract that establishes living and working conditions, but which ties them to the (in)hospitality of one specific, unsupervised host. Moreover, despite Peruvian herders’ experiences of oppressive labor practices in the Andes, which often tempers their reactions to U.S. working conditions, they should, at the very least, receive the same minimum wages and safe, hygienic working conditions mandated for other U.S. agricultural workers.

Transnational “Guests” and the Hospitality Trap

Hospitality whether public or private, is dependent on and controlled by the law and the state police ... It is a question of knowing how to transform and improve the law.(Jacques Derrida 2001:22)

When countries create the category of guest worker, the working guests and the host nation must negotiate an understanding of their new roles within the realm of *hospitality*.²¹ Although hospitality implies the cultivation of a relationship between guest and host, the etymology of the latter—the Latin *hostis* refers to both “host” and “enemy”—signals its conflictual nature (Derrida 2000:43–45).²² Indeed, the U.S. Congress seems to understand the contradictory and even cynical nuances associated with the term “guest worker” because they frequently opt instead to legislate “Temporary Worker” programs.

Derrida asserts that one of hospitality’s most serious contradictions relates to the linguistic power imbalance created between guest and host when the guest

does not understand the language of the master's laws. Thus, "foreigners" remain defenceless before laws that may welcome or expel him:

the foreigner is first of all foreign to the legal language in which the duty of hospitality is formulated, the right to asylum, its limits, norms, policing, etc. He has to ask for hospitality in a language which by definition is not his own, the one imposed on him by the master of the house, the host, the king, the lord, the authorities, the nation, the State. (Derrida 2000:17)

For Derrida, this linguistic aporia is just one of hospitality's many contradictions. Indeed, the distance between the "legal language in which the duty of hospitality is formulated" and the language understood by the "foreigner," remains one of the fundamental obstacles in any attempt to establish a just program for guest workers.

In addition to linguistic obstacles, Quechua shepherders' status as workers who are *both* temporary and legal contribute to legislators' chronic neglect of their situation, because attention is focused instead on the larger numbers of illegal workers who decide to remain permanently in the United States. As Smaïn Laacher has explained in relation to the EU, "The state concerns itself politically only with people who entered its territory without authorization and who have the intent of *remaining*" (2007:22). While people categorized as "illegal aliens" may not have legal rights, they *do* maintain a public presence; efforts to regularize their status is often recognized as "part of a larger struggle with other social and political groups" (Laacher 2007:18). Peruvian shepherders and other U.S. guest workers fall into an ambiguous and dangerous space, which Laacher identifies as a "political blind spot" because many employers assume that the mistreatment of temporary "guests" will never cause a legal conflict (Laacher 2007:26). Thus, the linguistic obstacles that impede herders' comprehension of their contracts, together with their contradictory status as a "temporary that lasts," and whose legal presence is tied to the whims of a specific rancher–host, combine to create the hospitality trap which ensnares H-2A "guest" workers.

Beyond the policy implications of herders' temporary legal status, interviews suggested that as a survival strategy most classify the physical and emotional exhaustion of life in Wyoming as a temporary, if excruciating, sacrifice. Herders' narratives alluded to the fact that in the United States their relationship to power is not characterized by a need to resist a *permanent* landlord exacting unfair tributes from the community's pastures, as it is in Peru. Instead, they described their lives there as a *temporary* hardship meted out on the land of another, which must be endured to ensure a better future for their families in a physically distant, but emotionally present, homeland. The frequency and intensity of herders'

expressions of orphanhood and “suffering in solitude” suggest that while their experiences with socioeconomic marginalization, oppressive power, and harsh Andean climates had prepared them for Wyoming’s low wages and working conditions, without the support of their families, communities, and culturally based rituals and celebrations, they had not found a way to mitigate these challenges on U.S. pastures.²³ Their suffering stemmed from the physical and emotional trials of working in a context which does not ritually link their herding labor to their families, communities, and mountain deities.

When discussing feelings of solitude and isolation, herders explained that the lack of herding celebrations in the United States made their work more monotonous and unfulfilling. While they did not expect U.S. ranchers to honor their animals in the same way that they are ritually acknowledged in the central Peruvian highlands, they found it “very unhealthy” that U.S. sheep owners did not formally fête their livestock. Throughout Perú, Quechua agropastoralists strive to maintain positive, reciprocal relationships between humans, animals, and the surrounding landscape.²⁴ The whims of mountain deities alternately nurture or curse the important life events of sheep, alpacas, and llamas, influencing cycles of birth, mating, shearing, and death. Herders asserted that Wyoming ranchers failed to recognize their contributions to the maintenance of the herds’ health, and were also disrespectful toward the sheep. As one herder said: “Here there are never any festivals. Only work, work, work and, of course, the animals behave badly. If you manage the animals with happiness they behave better.”

Herders affirmed that in Perú livestock rituals and festivals foster respectful relationships between humans, animals, and nature, and ensure the prosperity and well being of both animate and inanimate beings. Juan, a herder from Huancayo, explained,

In Perú ... we celebrate the lives of the animals. For example, during the carnival season [February or early March] we celebrate *señalakuy* to make the animals happy, to improve reproduction ... and later another important date is the festival of Santiago on July 25th.²⁵

Of course the animals perceive the happiness of the festival, they know that everything is for them and there is a psychological factor there - - - throughout the entire year our animals, our sheep, alpacas, llamas and cattle are easier to manage because they have enjoyed their festival and they know that we have given thanks to them.

The pan-Andean celebration (*señalakuy* in Peruvian Quechua; *la marcación* in Spanish) centers on showing appreciation to a community’s mountain deity protectors, livestock, and herders, in the hopes of stimulating the animals’ fertility during the mating season.²⁶ The celebration takes place throughout the Andes during the rainy season (December–March). Although each community honors its animals and

deities in a slightly different manner, the festival generally centres on the preparation and distribution (to animals and humans) of a fermented corn drink (*chicha* in Spanish; *aswa* or *aqha* in Quechua), the performance of songs and dances, and the perforation and decoration of each animal's ears with colored ribbons or string.

In many communities throughout the province of Huancayo, *señalakuy* occurs during the Carnival season and is one of the most important festivals celebrated in honor of a community's sheep flocks. Ernesto, a middle-aged herder from Huancayo, describes how his village celebrates the festival:

For the marking of the lambs we hold a big celebration. It could be with the *tinya* [a drum of pre-Colombian origin], it could be by singing an orchestral number, always singing ... they don't have that here, it's a novelty. No, no, they don't understand it at all. Whereas in Perú, yes, it's a custom there and we organize it in the month of March during the carnival season when we begin to dance the *huaylash* in our region - - - this is for the festival of the sheep, the *señalakuy* held each year.

When asked about the manner in which U.S. ranchers mark their sheep, Ernesto explained, "Here in America they do the marking directly, the difference is that there is no *señalakuy* festival. They don't use songs, names, or orchestras, nothing ..., they don't understand those things. Instead here the work is purely dry." When I asked Ernesto what he meant by "directly marking," he explained that each animal was quickly and "directly" tagged, "as if they were machines and did not need to be spoken to, sung to, and the process explained to them." Ernesto and others repeatedly described U.S. ranchers' impersonal treatment of their flocks. In bemoaning what they perceived as the poor treatment of sheep, herders' narratives implicitly expressed frustration that guest workers' labor also remained undervalued, even as they struggled to care for large, underappreciated flocks (Fig. 3).

Herders also worried that they had never seen a weaver in Wyoming, and lamented that because ranchers value their animals' meat more than their wool, most sheep remained cantankerous throughout the year. I asked herders at several ranches if sheep might appreciate a marking celebration with colored ribbons, dances, and songs. One herder joked, "Maybe it would do the American sheep some good, maybe they'd reproduce more - - - that's why there are carnivals in Perú, so that there will be more animals the next year." Then, more seriously, he said, "What we carry out over there is a belief that is unique to Peruvians, but maybe it wouldn't work here - - - we think that it wouldn't work [in the U.S.]." Several herders hypothesized that U.S. sheep did not need celebrations and rituals in order to stimulate fertility because they consumed large quantities of "antibiotics and other medicines." Others believed that the different breeds of sheep raised in the United States would not appreciate such



Figure 3 A ranch foreman uses his truck to move a trailer to a new campsite between Kemmerer and Cokeville, Wyoming. The two herders who live in the trailer follow behind on the road, coaxing their sheep across the highway.

festivities; many thought that the scarcity of skilled musicians and singers would render the ritual null. Most herders insisted that in a land bereft of mountain deities —“enchanted ones” (*incantados*) in Huancayo—there would be no one to hear their call for protection and fertility.

As mentioned above, and as Barbara Bradby explains in her study of a musical representation of herder and rancher (*patrón*) conflict performed in the Mantaro Valley, livestock herding in Perú is also replete with difficulties. Those who herd another’s animals on far-ranging pastures must often cope with severe weather, treacherous landscapes, loneliness, drought, and hunger in exchange for meagre remuneration, inadequate food rations, and ill-treatment (Bradby 2006:94–95). In the central Peruvian highlands, however, yearly ritual events such as the Carnival and Santiago festivals offer herders a celebration that honors their toil.²⁷ Herders in Wyoming rarely mention the challenges faced while tending sheep at home; yet what they *do* explain—Wyoming ranchers’ lack of appreciation for their animals and employees, and failure to organize herding festivals—reflects their frustration with a U.S. herding culture bereft of the ritual opportunity for “reckoning” with an employer (Bradby 2006:93).

Many herders suggested that their own suffering could be traced to U.S. agropastoral practices that concentrate more on profit margins than on relationships between humans, animals, and the land. Juan explained that the smaller flock sizes in Perú permit animals to graze closer to towns and villages. Smaller flocks need less space for grazing and can remain in the same vicinity for a longer period—allowing

for the rotation of herding duties within a family or kinship group. Juan described how his life as a sheep owner in Perú differed from his present reality in Wyoming:

In Perú my family has 35 sheep and then the families of my brother and my compadres also have more or less the same number—each one of us helps with the herding... Here in Wyoming of course things are much different; I'm with the animals all day, everyday. For the past year I've been here and I can tell you that my life is sad, very sad... the solitude kills, my family is over there, here everything is difficult, but with the [economic] crisis in my country it's hard. Here there is work - - - work and also exploitation. There's exploitation too. And of course the solitude - - - it's the solitude that kills.

Wilfredo, a middle-aged herder from Huancayo, explained that in his community families pasture cattle and sheep in addition to farming “subsistence” food crops and raising pigs, chickens, and guinea pigs. He noted that in Wyoming most ranchers concentrate their energy and resources on maintaining huge flocks of sheep destined for the mutton market. According to Wilfredo and others, the sheep are aware of this grim future and resent the fact that their wool is not esteemed:

In Perú the sheep are for subsistence, for the wool, and of course we thank our animals by giving them their *chicha*, their flowers. Here the bosses have a lot of angry sheep—between 1,800 or 2,000 in each group—and one has to invent some way to manage them... it's just more difficult - - - for us humans and for the sheep.

Wilfredo's nephew Ernesto concurred:

In Huancayo my sheep are of the Junín breed and they are used for meat and wool, they're more tame, nicer—here they are of the Colombia and Rambouillet breed and they're just for meat. Here the bosses don't make cheese either because of course this slows the growth of the animals. Here, more than anything else the bosses prefer profit and of course the animals understand this and so they are more ornery, they run a lot, a lot, too much.

Many herders asserted that their own discontent stemmed from the same problem that angered the Wyoming sheep—a lack of respect and communication between ranchers, their animals, and the herders.

Conclusion

In presenting the accounts of Quechua shepherders working in remote Wyoming pastures, this article has described the physical hardships and emotional orphan-

hood endured by these “guest” workers. Contextualized in terms of 20th-century Peruvian (im)migration patterns and U.S. migrant worker programs, their narratives demonstrate that federal guidelines for temporary worker programs do not adequately protect guest workers from falling into a hospitality trap. Instead of finding hosts who provide basic necessities and decent wages for their guest workers, herders in Wyoming describe quotidian existences of lonely and arduous monotony, which only serve to heighten the strain of remaining physically absent from their homes. The harsh realities of herders’ lives in the United States, coupled with the unrealistic expectations of what they had hoped to encounter, lead to widespread discontent and the fear that they have little or no recourse over their working and living conditions. Finally, the herders’ narratives suggest that much of their discomfort and frustration stem from the profit-driven excesses of U.S. agropastoralism—a system that impedes the creation of productive and respectful relationships between humans, animals, and the land.

Andean herders have struggled with arduous working conditions at least since colonial times and it seems unlikely that Quechua herders will ever develop a relationship of mutual respect and esteem toward the unfamiliar and antagonistic mountains and sheep of Wyoming. Nevertheless, ranchers who employ “guest” sheepherders should be obliged to provide their employees with the minimum wage and living conditions established by the Department of Labor for other agricultural workers. As the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Relations insists, it is absolutely necessary that the Department of Labor begin to recognize herding as a productive agricultural activity meriting monetary compensations similar to those received by other temporary agricultural workers holding H-2A visas (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2005a:17). Congress should work toward the reform of enforcement mechanisms needed to guarantee compliance with minimum wage and living standards, while also reconsidering the practice of binding each guest worker to the service of one specific host–employer.

Notes

¹“Quechua” is generally used to describe the ethnic and linguistic identity of indigenous Andean peoples. Quechua speakers call their language *runasimi*, literally “the tongue of the people.” Although many Quechua speakers living in urban areas do not consider themselves “indigenous” (*indígena*), Quechua agropastoralists who self-identify as indigenous collectively refer to themselves as *runakuna*—the Quechua word for “humans” or “people.” See, for example, Marisol de la Cadena (2000).

²This and other translations from Spanish or Quechua are my own. Transcriptions of sheepherders’ Quechua and Spanish language statements can be read in the electronic version of this article.

³Altamirano Rua cites Western Range Association (WRA) statistics and reports: in 1990, as many as 3,000 Peruvian herders worked on sheep ranches in the western U.S. (1991:209). Fifteen years later, Pærregaard (citing statistics collated by the WRA office in Lima) places the number of Peruvian herders working in the United States with WRA contracts at 2,000 (2005:103). Ranchers I interviewed in Wyoming (2006–2007) and Idaho (2002) explained that in the past 20 years, declining prices in interna-

tional wool and mutton markets (related, in part, to increased production in Australian and New Zealand) have reduced flock sizes and, consequently, the number of herder contracts.

⁴See Pærregaard (2005:109–111) for an analysis of sheepherders' investment of their earnings, as well as the socioeconomic importance of their remittances in the Alto Cunas region of the central Peruvian Andes.

⁵Most of the herders interviewed cited Hollywood films as their primary source of information about the United States before their arrival in Wyoming. Many admitted that their Peruvian contacts had not accurately described the difficult working conditions. Instead, the narratives of return migrants focused on the impressive cars, highways, and airplanes seen during travel to and from their arrival airport. See Altamirano Rua (2000:157–158), Appadurai (2004:103–104) and Sayad (2004:27) for descriptions of this type of "collective lie" (Sayad).

⁶For a description of the sheepherders' yearly cycle of labor, see Altamirano's account of the three distinct "herding seasons" (1990:210–213; see also Pærregaard 2005:104–105).

⁷Wyoming ranchers have lobbied their state legislature for passage of the "Sheep Abandonment Act," which clearly illustrates the conflicts between ranchers and their employees. The act would have allowed ranchers to sue and fine herders who abandoned flocks without a five-day notification (Wyoming State Legislature 3). Although the act received widespread support, it failed to pass into law after a vote in the State Senate in February 2006: <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/2006/introduced/sf0017.pdf>

⁸For studies of the feelings of alienation expressed by Peruvian immigrants living in urban areas, see Ávila Molero (2003) and Pærregaard (2008).

⁹For the herders' protection I have used pseudonyms throughout and removed identifying characteristics from descriptions of employers.

¹⁰In the translations of Spanish and Quechua interviews, a pause of four seconds or more is indicated by three dashes (- - -).

¹¹Gonçález Holguín's 1608 dictionary entry for the verb *ñakay* includes the gloss for a phrase that joins the verbs "ñacay" and "kawsay" ("to live"): "ñacaymanta cauçani" ("Vivir con mucho trabajo y miseria," "To live with much work and misery") (1952:255). Other inflected and conjugated entries for *ñakay* include words and phrases that express "suffering from lack and pain because of excessive work" ("ñaccarini ñaccaricuni"); "to suffer for another" ("ñaccariccupuni"); "insufferable, miserable life of labor" ("ñacaymanta ñacaymana cauçay") (Gonçález Holguín 1952:254–255).

¹²Santacruz Pachacuti Yamqui's transcription of the Incan prayer to Manco Capac [1613] offers a clear example of this convention (see Harrison 1989:92–101). The Incan hymns transcribed by Cristóbal de Molina in his *fábulas y mitos de los incas* also suggest the stylistic and ritual importance of repeating questions in quick succession within prayers to deities. See, for example, Molina 1989:82. See also Allen (2002:244–247) for the transcription and analysis of a contemporary Quechua call and response song.

¹³Landlord and hacendado-employers often use aspects of linguistic and cultural identities that they share with their employees to extend hegemonic control into workers' private lives. See Lyons 2005:109,113; Mariátegui 2005; Poole 1988:381; Vásquez 1963:30–35. Obviously, Wyoming ranchers cannot use this power play, although H-2A visa laws, work contract stipulations, and the ranches remoteness allows them an enormous amount of control over the lives and movements of their employees.

¹⁴See Goldfarb (1981) for a history of the federal government's failure to enforce housing codes and wage contracts.

¹⁵I did meet the Peruvian wife of a sheep ranch foreman working in Idaho in 2002 (and several herders told me about a Wyoming rancher who had hired the Peruvian wife of one of his herders), but such cases remain rare because employers assume that a child will soon follow a wife's arrival.

¹⁶In most western states herders earn US\$750–US\$850 per month, while in California, years of petitioning spearheaded by Central California Legal Services has helped to raise monthly salaries to

US\$1,200. Even if Wyoming herders only worked forty-hour weeks (most affirm that they actively herd for at least eighty-four hours per week), their hourly pay would still only total a dismal US\$4.69—well below the federal U.S. minimum wage of US\$7.25 per hour. Several herders (including Wencislau and César) mentioned that they know others working in California who earn twice as much; in neighboring states herders earn US\$100–US\$200 more per month. Yet most interviewees asserted that they were primarily interested in securing radios or cell phones for emergencies, access to a shower on a weekly basis, and time off at least once per month to go to town, or to relax with other herders.

¹⁷29 USC. § 213(a)(6)(E) (2004).

¹⁸29 C.F.R. § 1910.142 (2009), United States Department of Labor. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Temporary labor camps: Regulations Standards (2009). http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=9791, accessed February 8, 2009.

¹⁹Ranchers interviewed in Wyoming repeatedly described former employees opening stores and businesses and paying for their children's schooling "in Perú where everything is so much cheaper." I never had to ask ranchers about the low wages because it was one of the first topics they broached, often through defensive descriptions of their own feelings of economic marginalization within an agricultural sector that only permits them to "just barely survive by paying low wages to foreign workers." Ranchers also emphasize that because no U.S. workers are willing to work as herders they feel justified in contracting employees abroad at wages that "would not seem so low if they were earning them in their own country."

²⁰8 USC. § 1188(c)(4) (1986).

²¹Derrida (2000:73), Laacher (2007: 25), and Dikeç (2002: 232) recognize hospitality as a "natural," "universal" law of humanity, while also conceding that the complex and frequently contradictory nature of hospitality leads to its modifications and limitations in response to the needs, desires, and whims of individual nation states.

²²Sayad makes a similar point: the interest of emigrant-immigrants (and their country of origin) ultimately comes into conflict with the "official or state interests of the country of immigration" (2004:85). Because host countries are interested in creating "super-profits" for their own citizens (or "users"), the opposition between guest and host becomes "a paradigmatic variation on the more basic opposition between a wage-earning labor force and its employers, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie" (Sayad 2004:85).

²³Two of the 24 Peruvian herders interviewed described an amicable relationship with their "American *patron*;" they held a U.S. driver's licence, and enjoyed frequent access to telephones, vehicles, emergency health care services, and social events.

²⁴For detailed ethnographic studies of the reciprocal interactions between *runa*, animals, mountain gods, and other sacred elements of nature see, for example, Allen (2002:49–74) and Flores Ochoa (1985).

²⁵Throughout the Andes, the Catholic apostle Santiago is widely considered to be a patron saint of horses, as well as cattle, sheep, and camelid flocks. The "Fiesta de Santiago" (celebrated either on 25 July, or during the latter part of July or early August) involves dancing, singing, and the marking of livestock. For a description and analysis of the Santiago festival in Junín's Mantaro Valley, see Bradby (2006:83–98). See also Bolin (1998:84–161).

²⁶Gose provides descriptions and analyses of the *inka* offerings performed during the Santiago festival (1994:91–92) and the February Carnival festival (1994:195–224). Allen describes animal-marking ceremonies and fertility rites in the Quechua community of Sonqo, Cuzco (2002:127–149). Delgado Aragón gives a detailed description of *señalakuy* celebrations in the province of Carabaya, Puno. See also Dransart (1997 88–95, 2002:63–66); Mamani Mamani (1990:2–7) and Arnold and Dios Yapita (1998:118–171).

²⁷Bradby's study of the Santiago festival in the Mantaro Valley demonstrates how the branding celebration provides an opportunity for a ritual catharsis and the achievement of symbolic "vengeance"

for employers' unfulfilled promises, poor treatment or disrespect for employees and/or his animals (2006:83–98). Similarly, the songs performed by cattle herders during an August marking celebration in the Chancay Valley (Lima highlands) serve to chastise landowners' excesses and underscore the difficulties herders face (Rivera Andía 2005:141–143).

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