

Life and the Human Body

| THREE COMMUNITIES GENERAL | | | |
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| Question | Salasaka | Zuleta | Ugsha |
| 3.1 Is the human body seen to mirror the wider cosmos, or any particular feature (e.g. a mountain)? ¹ | No*. Doesn't know. Could be true. The mountains reflect you, eg. volcanoes Taita Chimborazo and/or Mama Tunguhuara/Wela** ² . Probably yes, but needs to think more on it. No, the mountains are just there. | Yes.* No.* Distinctly human, not related to landforms. Yes; the earth and mountains are like a human body. Yes, the mountains can symbolize the body. When it rains, the mountain is crying. Yes, the mountains are symbolic of life. The natural world is a symbol.* They are peoples' relatives. | Doesn't know.** Yes, like the mountain has lungs. No*. |
| 3.2 What do you believe about the 'life force' or 'vital energy'? Does it animate only living creatures, or is it seen to be in all things, animate and inanimate? | You see it in everything.** It animates everything.** Only in living/animate things*. Doesn't understand. | Only in animate ('living') things.** It's in all, animate and inanimate. A vertical column distributed in many things. In everything**. In everything, there wouldn't be existence without it. All have this energy. Pachamama, is a general vivifying energy that animates all. | Only animate/living things**. It's the holy spirit and only in living things. In everything.** |
| 3.3 Are any bodily substances (e.g. fat, blood, sweat etc) understood as having special | They are symbols of life.* No, they aren't*. Yes, they are. Blood has a special property as our children are our own blood. Doesn't know.* Yes, but doesn't | Blood and fat of certain animals had power. Yes, sweat and fat used as a lubricant or a charm by people in the past. He continues to use it. They are [all] symbols of life.* No.* | Yes, they [all] have special properties.* Yes, they are symbols of life.** Sweat and fat. |

¹ The question was actually translated as: "Have you ever thought you were a mirror to others?" (Alguna vez has pensado que eres un espejo a los de más?)

² Mountains seen as parents or grandparents, as guardians, they give life, but that are seen as having human emotions, erupting or having snow on them etc; if you annoy them they will get angry or harm you.

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| properties, or to be symbols of life? | understand any more. Doesn't believe it, never heard of it. More in the power/symbolism of blood.* | Blood and sweat; [older people] used human fat/oil and sweat to oil things for power. Yes, these contain the sense of being of an individual. All these substances have 'power', but mostly reflect the state of the mind. Not really. Yes, they have special properties.* | |
| 3.4 Are the mind and body separate, or are they part of a larger 'whole'? | They are all the same. Part of everything/of a larger whole.** | They are one, not divided. Part of a greater whole. One whole.** They have different functions but are part of a single whole. One whole, all is life, your thoughts affect the functioning of your body. They are different ie two parts. For them to be separate doesn't make sense. | Part of one/ larger whole.** |
| 3.5 What are the functions of the body (e.g. breathing, eating, circulation, mind and feelings)? | All of these.** All one but with its own functions. Your body needs water, air and food to survive. | To live. The functions support the life [and] the soul. All the same; you need all*, all united, to sustain life. The heart is the motor of the body. They are all those [things] that give life to the organism. | All these.* Heart. Alimentation.** Circulation.* Respiration. Feelings. They give life. |

* Frequent; ** very frequent

Selected quotes/responses

Zuleta

"The earth, mountains etc is like a human body, with organs, it feels; it has rights. A plant is a living body. This is a more general community belief and is starting to be recovered from having been lost for a time, although our grandparents and great grandparents had this belief." (16)

“The blood and fat of certain animals had power. Grandparents ate condor, to have a long life; drank the blood of a fierce bull to protect against bad energies or witchcraft. This belief still persists. [You eat the] heart/blood of a fox to protect against bad energies”. (16)

“The functions support the Life, soul. When you die, the soul enters another dimension.” (16)

| GALÁPAGOS RESPONDENTS | |
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| Question | Responses |
| 3.1 Is the human body seen to mirror the wider cosmos, or any particular feature (e.g. a mountain)? ³ | 1) No. 2) It could be, I never thought about it. 3) It could be so, but I don't know. 4) I don't think so. 5) I never thought it and I don't believe it. 6) No, no I don't believe that I should be a mirror of these. 7) I never thought this. 8) Yes, that something natural or normal. For our children we are role models. 9) I don't believe it's so. 10) We are all children of God so we could be mirrors to others. 11) Yes. |
| 3.2 What do you believe about the 'life force' or 'vital energy'? Does it animate only living creatures, or is it seen to be in all things, animate and inanimate? | 1) Yes, if it affects [you]. Many times it affects negatively when it is not controlled. 2) It is something that all beings have. And the vital force does not affect from one to the other. 3) We all have the vital energy so yes, it does have an effect on the family and those closest to it. 4) We all have internal vital energy which can affect either positively or negatively. 5) All living beings have internal strength. Between people that energy can have an effect but it can not cause an effect on nature. 6) I do have the vital force and I think that all living beings have to have the vital force, which depending on it (bad / good), can affect the family and the others. 7) Yes, it animates all living beings and it affects the rest. 8) All human beings have the vital energy. And this energy, depending on it, has an effect on others. |

³ The question was actually translated as: “Have you ever thought you were a mirror to others?” (Alguna vez has pensado que eres un espejo a los de más?)

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| | <p>9) We all have, and if it causes effect on others [as] when we are happy and angry.</p> <p>10) All living beings have the vital force and this can affect the others. For example, when we are motivated we infect others, likewise our anger affects others.</p> <p>11) Yes, I believe so, but I can't describe it.</p> |
| <p>3.3 Are any bodily substances (e.g. fat, blood, sweat etc) understood as having special properties, or to be symbols of life?</p> | <p>1) Yes.</p> <p>2) It is true. For example, the blood of animals is used not to get sick. But, personally, I have not tried it yet.</p> <p>3) For my part, I do not believe that bodily substances are symbols of life, but I have heard that other people do these things.</p> <p>4) I do believe that the bodily substances of people are symbols of life. Because I've seen that the donkey fat helps to get rid of diseases, but I can't say how.</p> <p>5) I think I've heard this, but I've never done it.</p> <p>6) Yes, body substances help us to live strong and healthily and prevent diseases. I have taken blood from cattle so as not to be afraid and not to get sick.</p> <p>7) For me, I don't believe this.</p> <p>8) Yes, many of the body substances help reduce or prevent some type of discomfort in the body. For example, I have seen in my family that urine helps someone who drinks too much alcohol, that is, urine helps the person to recover consciousness when drunk.</p> <p>9) Yes, bodily substances have special properties to prevent many pains and diseases. For example, the blood of a large rat serves to alleviate back pain, while a dog's blood is used to treat epilepsy.</p> <p>10) I don't believe in this.</p> <p>11) Yes, many of them. For example, cattle manure help a sick child improve.</p> |
| <p>3.4 Are the mind and body separate, or are they part of a larger 'whole'?</p> | <p>1) The body is God's creation, so the mind and the body is part of God.</p> <p>2) The body and the mind is a single whole, everything is united.</p> <p>3) Each part of the body is one whole</p> <p>4) Yes, the mind and the body are one whole.</p> <p>5) All the parts of the body are united, so they are one whole.</p> <p>6) All parts of the body are one.</p> <p>7) Everything is connected; it's one.</p> <p>8) Everything is united and each part depends on the other.</p> <p>9) I think that each one is separate.</p> <p>10) All parts of the body are united, they are one. The parts of the body are like the parts of a car.</p> <p>11) The only thing I could say is that all the parts of the body are united.</p> |

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| <p>3.5 What are the functions of the body (e.g. breathing, eating, circulation, mind and feelings?)</p> | <p>1) Each part of the body has different functions. For example,, the head to think, feet to walk, hands to work. 2) As above. 3) The feet serve to mobilize us from one place to another, the mind serves to think, the hands serve to work and the heart gives us life and generates energy. 4) Feet to walk, hands to work, mind to think. 5) The hands serve to work and the mind to think. 6) The mind serves to think, the hands to write, the feet to play and walk. 7) Mind to think, feet to walk, hands to work. 8) Each part of the body serves a certain function. For example, the feet serve to walk and the head serves to think. 9) The feet serve to walk and the hands serve to get things. 10) The hands serve to work and the head serves to think and this is the important part of the body. 11) Each part of the body has its own functions. Thus, the hands serve to work, the head to think, the mouth to converse, the nails to harvest⁴ the potatoes (work the earth), etc</p> |
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| SALASAKA – RECORDED INTERVIEWS | |
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| Question | Response |
| <p>3.1 Have you ever thought you might be a mirror of all these?⁵ Also asked (correct): Is the human body reflecting the wider cosmos or some particular feature (for example, a mountain)?</p> | <p>12) I don't know if I'm a mirror of these things, the only thing I can is that yes, they have to see me because I am not locked in the house as if I were a disabled person. As I walk well those who have to see me have to tell me I'm healthy. 13) I have never thought this. 14) Actually I have come to think that. But I always thank nature at the start and end of the day; I thank it for the land, for the water that I have, without them I couldn't live. For example, if I do not have land where I would go?</p> |

⁴ The word given in Spanish was 'deservar' to preserve, which doesn't make sense, so it has been translated as 'harvest' which would be 'cosechar'.

⁵ This question 'morphed' in the interviews and therefore doesn't really reflect the original which was: "Is the human body seen to mirror the wider cosmos, or any particular feature (e.g. a mountain)?"

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| | <p>If I do not have what I am going to live? If I do not have plants, what will I eat? and how will I breathe ? That is the conception that I have had.</p> <p>15) Yes, I consider Mama Kinlli as my mother.</p> |
| <p>3.2 What do you believe about the 'vital force' or 'vital energy'? Does it animate only living creatures, or is it seen in all things, animate and inanimate?</p> | <p>12) One's life has to be demonstrated to our children, sons-in-law and grandchildren. We must advise them according to the life we lead, we are daring and good, the question is to teach our family. Because we have been taught that there really is a God, so when we cease to exist in this world, he will ask us of good we have left in the world, what we have taught the family. That is why we must teach our children to be workers, not to be envious, to live in unity and always seek to live in equality. All living beings have The vital energy, so while they are well we are fine. However if it rains with lightning or if there is thunder from the mountains, we are frightened and we feel sad and worried. For example, recently Mama Awela (Tungurahua volcano) was making great thunder and emitting ash so we were scared, it has calmed down and we are calm.</p> <p>13) The 'vital force' exists in all people and this energy is transmitted to the other living beings (creatures). For example, I am happy when I share with others, when I am alone I become sad.</p> <p>14) Yes, I believe in my own energy. My energy has an effect on the rest. Yes, my energy has a positive effect on the rest, only positive.</p> <p>15) Answer given was not relevant to the question.</p> |
| <p>3.3 It is understood that bodily substances (eg, fat, blood, sweat, etc.) have special properties or are symbols of life?</p> | <p>12) Yes I believe so, for example, when we have a severe headache and are about to faint and want to vomit, according to my mother's teaching is that we have to smell the sweat of our armpits and chew the tip of a hair so that the desire to vomit passes and we don't faint, which I have done and I have recovered. My mother's teaching is true, therefore, bodily substances have healing properties. Also drinking the blood of freshly killed animals is good for our health because the animals, for example sheep, live only on plants. Likewise, I have heard that when a person has the beginnings of epilepsy, he has to take warm blood from a small (young) dog and until he has to eat meat of a guinea pig [and] to drink blood, this process helps him to heal from attacks of epilepsy.</p> <p>13) I have heard that you should drink the blood of another person not to die, and so that they don't do witchcraft against you. But I have never done this.</p> <p>14) I never preactised it, in spite of having heard this. For example, it's said that you should take water boiled with hair [in it] with the end of preventing and healing heart pain. In the same way [also] water from the heart of a stone.</p> <p>15) I have heard this, but I've never done it. Personally yes I believe it, because the natural substances have spirit which can help and heal or [also] power to the one who practices it.</p> |
| <p>3.4 Are the mind and body separate, or are they part of a larger 'whole'?</p> | <p>12) The unity of the body in a whole is realized when some part of the body hurts, for example, if our leg hurts strongly that pain is also felt in the head. Or there are times when only pain is felt in only one part of the body, such as knee pain [taken as meaning art of a larger whole].</p> |

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| | <p>13) Not asked. 14) It's all one thing. 15) I feel that the body, the mind and the rest of the body is one. What I do not understand is why when there is some pain in my body it is not felt in the whole body but it is felt only in a specific part of the body. I even ask the question to myself, if the body is one, why when there is some discomfort it is felt only in one or two parts of the body? I cannot answer.</p> |
| <p>3.5 What are the functions of the body (e.g. breathing, eating, circulation, mind and feelings?)</p> | <p>12) Not asked/answered 13) Each of the body parts are complimentary. Feet serve to walk, eyes to see, ears to hear, hands to work. 14) The mind serves to think. For the rest, all parts of the body are interrelated. Without these body parts we wouldn't have life. 15) Not asked/answered</p> |
| <p>3.6 Do you believe that people have: i. mente - mind ii. cuerpo - body iii. alma - soul iv. espíritu - spirit v. sombra - shadow vi. otro - other The answers are to v) and vi)</p> | <p>12) Yes. People have two shadows, one you can see from far away [or looks away] and the other is close to us. The shadows are or represent our parents that is why when we go out somewhere we always tell our shadow to accompany us and take care of bad things. And you realise that we are accompanied by our parents when we are alone in the house and suddenly you hear someone calling from outside, you go out to see and you cannot see anyone, or it also happens when you are between the two, you hear voices very close, but you don't see anyone, that's when you realise that the spirits of our parents are with us. 13) The shadow serves to see the time according to the position of the sun. For example, when the sun is located in the centre of the sky just in the direction of the crown (of the head), it's 12 midday. [This understanding of shadow is literal]. 14) Yes, when I see myself in the shadow I feel complete. I feel that the shadow protects [you]. vi. Yes, I believe that we have other things too. 15) Yes, I feel that the shadow is my reflection vi. Yes, to other people we feel it or consider it as our own brother [is she still referring to the shadow here?]</p> |