The Origin Myth of Sun and Moon in the Andean and Korean Traditions*

Park Ho-Jin
Researcher in the Institute of Latin American Studies at University Hankuk of Foreign Studies, Korea

Rodolfo Sánchez Garrafa
Consultant in Peru on the Andean world and former postgraduate professor in anthropology at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Peru

ABSTRACT

This essay begins with the interesting fact that Korea and Peru have in common the rope motif in their cultural traditions of the sun and moon creation. The origin myths of the sun and the moon all over the world have caught on steadily in folklore studies. But it is not easy to find any previous comparison between Korean origin myths and Peruvian ones, with all their peculiar comparable elements. Based on Lévi-Strauss's theory of mythemes, we seek to analyse the Korean story 'The Brother and Sister who Became Sun and Moon' and the Andean 'Wakon and the Willkas' in terms of five mythemic aspects: the revelation of a primordial time; the single mother and her journey; the twins or siblings; the trickster, predator or victimiser; and the cosmic rope and the transit between upper and lower worlds. In both traditions we find a common mythological structure in spite of their apparent differences. When the myths employ the rope in a similar way, it hardly seems cross cultural but uniquely culture specific. When it comes to this similarity, however, their relationship or influence will need explicating in further comprehensive studies.

Keywords

origin myths, the sun and the moon, the rope motif, 'The Brother and Sister who Became Sun and Moon' (or 'Brother Sun and Sister Moon'), 'Wakon and the Willkas' (or 'Pachamama and Her Willkas')

Introduction

Origin stories, particularly related to the sun and the moon, are conspicuous all over the world. They are considered basic in the ethnography of universal world views. You can also find various versions of their creation in Korea and Peru. In Korean and Peruvian stories, surprisingly enough, are some common features. However, there are also diverse and peculiar significations that concern each specific context. In accordance with the comparative approach in ethnology, we propose to examine the etiological cycle of the sun and the moon in the two Andean and Korean traditions in order to explore their similarities and differences as well. We expect this procedure to provide some insight into the way the world views are configured and have worked in their traditional societies. For the convenience of comparison, however, our reference is expressly restricted to the materials relevant to the folk tale of 'The Brother and Sister Who Became Sun and Moon' (also well known as 'The Brother Sun and the Sister Moon') in Korea and to the myth of 'Wakon and the Willkas' (or 'Pachamama and Her Willkas') in Peru.

To begin with, both South Korea and Peru consider themselves as commanding a similarly long cultural history. The legendary origin of the Korean nation dates back more than five thousand years, when its founder Dangun was born from the union of the Heaven God's son and the bear woman. In legend, the Korean ancestral grandmother was a woman into whom a bear had come to transfigure herself with great patience and then gave birth to Dangun, the 'grandfather' of all Koreans. In the Andean region of Peru today, on the other hand, archaeologists have discovered the ancient city of Caral, whose antiquity was found to have dated to 3000 BC. There were urban settlements there five thousand years ago. Now, we understand that, between these two cultures, there are notable differences, in territorial, ethnic and evolutionary terms. But we also find contrasting parameters in their lives and ideas valid enough to understand how these two peoples thought and responded to their immediate natural environments as shown in the two stories we are analysing.

The Andean story has strong mythical nuances, while the Korean one is widely known in the Korea society as a folk tale. However, the Korean story is undoubtedly of a mythological origin. So, we find it interesting to compare the typical versions of these two well-known stories in their respective regions, although we can hardly say that they necessarily epitomise the mentalities of culture and nature in which they have been originated and preserved.

This essay, if not strictly opting for a structural approach, attempts to analyse the symbolism in both texts, employing 'mythemes' as proposed by Claude Lévi-Strauss, to identify common motifs. However, it is not intended to trace semantic, semiotic or phonetic traits on the grounds of, say, the scheme of Johansson Keraudren (1994). Through our methodology, a primal dualistic vision is confirmed in the conception of the cosmos, in which the 'rope' motif of our primary concern carries out a visible connecting function between upper and lower worlds in both stories. In the anthropocentric visions, besides, the sun and the moon are thought worldwide to have been created by human agency or at least come into being by human intervention – similar to what happens in the stories we are analysing. This essay, we hope, can pave the way for, and excite, further studies with more substantial evidence.

Development

The story of Wakon and the Willkas employs basic motifs as follows: time and the primordial world, the pregnancy and birth of the heroic twins, the pilgrim widow, the Wakon of caverns, the ordeals of the twin Willkas, the vicissitudes of the Willkas' journey, the warning of the bird Waychaw, the grandmother fox, the rope and the twins' ascent to heaven, and the transformation of the twins into the sun and the moon. This concept of time and the primordial world, in contrast, if hinted at in the story of Brother Sun and Sister Moon, has been lost. In the cycle of this Korean story, some versions almost turn a blind eye to time and the primordial world, and focus only on their protagonists as often seen in folk tales. Neither is the pregnancy and birth of the siblings narrated. Likewise, there were no animals to assist the brother and sister in the Korean story. The mythical universes in our two stories only share such external motifs as the pilgrim widow, the trickster, the rope and the children's ascent to heaven, and their transfiguration into the sun and the moon. Out of these concise but complex plot elements, we contrast a basic common structure in the light of the Korean and Andean traditions.

The revelation of a primordial time

What stands out more than anything else is the reference that the myths of our concern make towards a primordial time that memory barely reaches. The Peruvian story of Wakon and the Willkas refers to Pachakamaq, the god of the night sky, husband of the earth goddess Pachamama. He fathered twin children, male and female, called Willkas (which literally means 'ancestors' and 'descendants' at

the same time). The story also alludes to a time that leads to the other side of darkness, that is, to the articulation of time in which opposites alternate, with darkness followed by light. This time was when Pachamama's children were enlightened or empowered by their father Pachakamaq. This kind of story was understood with this sense of time in its original archaic society. There is, in the Andean case, a direct correspondence with the so-called 'myths of Huarochirí', ordered to be collected by the Catholic priest Francisco de Ávila, an extirpator of idolatries, in the seventeenth century (Taylor 1987). For this reason, the Peruvian narrative that serves as our primary text was added to the exemplary records, clothed in sacredness. It has underlain the world view elaborated in the Andes.

The story implies that a succession of humanities appeared on earth. At least one humanity existed in times of total darkness, and another followed with the appearance of the sun and the moon. Pachakamaq and Pachamama were powerful deities in a primal cosmos. The Willkas in turn inaugurated the time of our humanity. According to this narrative, there must have been more than two solar ages.

Likewise, all the Korean versions of the story might not begin even with the magic words 'once upon a time', but what is implicit is that it was a time before, and quite different from ours. In those days, the light came from the celestial bodies that were neither the sun nor the moon. The story begins out of nowhere to attract the listener's attention. In the course of the story, however, it is clarified why the brother and sister did what they did in terms of the origin of the sun and the moon. At first, the elder brother became the sun, and the sister the moon. But the younger girl felt scared as the moon became enshrouded in darkness. Now, on her behalf, they changed their roles: she travelled as the sun in the broad daylight, and he shone as the moonlight in the dark night sky. This narrative, peculiarly enough, substitutes the siblings' love for the notable androcentric tendency mirroring heliocentrism, which has been prevalent throughout the world for all ages. So the story amounts to more than a cosmogonic and etiological myth.

In the Andean world and in Korean as well, anyway, the birth of the sun and the moon is the starting point of our world. It is the source of yin and yang in East Asia, including in Korean culture. In Peru, likewise, their births echo the complementary duality or *yanantin* as the highest principle of the world. Interestingly enough, *yanantin* is similar to the concept of yin and yang. In the Andean world more than any other, they have conceived everyday life in terms of complementary opposites, as illustrated in man and woman, sun and moon, sky and earth, etc.

The single mother and her journeys

In the Andean story, the life of the twins' mother is

Figure 1
Pachamama (transformed into a mountain) with the two Willkas (as the sun and the moon).
Painted by Roberto Mamani Mamani (*Al vuelo* Nº 61 /August/ 2020).

narrated in detail. In a sense, this story is divided into two parts: the first can be an independent story that narrates how Wakon killed her husband and her father Pachakamaq in the fight. The other part begins with the long journey the mother Pachamama set off on with her twins. It is a painful process for food and shelter.

In contrast to the Andean story, the Korean counterpart does not provide any details about the siblings' mother. She is a widow in some versions, but other, perhaps older, accounts do not specify. The fact is, she is for herself and on her own. She is not under male protection, which typically leads them to poverty-stricken, everyday lives. She has to work hard for other households to secure her own sustenance and her children's welfare. In a sense, she might be a mother to anyone, but not particularly to these two children in those days. She can be, in some respect, the listener's mother in this folk tale.

The Andean twins and the Korean siblings

Pachamama, the powerful being of the underworld, conceives two children. These fraternal twins reissue a primal complementary duality *in illo tempore*. The twins are *wakas* (holy beings or holy places), which means that they participate in the sacredness of Pachakamaq, the fertilising *waka*. Born in our world, the Willkas emerge into a liminal space, that is, the land we inhabit. The Willkas endorse the liminal character of the earthly and intermediate world. The sun attracts the earth and vice versa. It is the earth that helps to sustain a primordial link between day and night. When Pachakamaq drowned in the sea of Lurín, it was an event on a cosmic scale. It is symbolically updated every time the sun sets on the western horizon. The Old Sun is to be replaced and a heroic adventure begins for its offspring. The transit of the twins is not an easy process but rather full of pain and dangers. They suffer persecution, which Wakon, a powerful, violent and cannibalistic being, inflicts with prominent eyes without bones. He is identified as having a feline face or masked in that appearance (López de Gomara 1941). The tension in which the opposites encounter is thus evidenced for the universe.

Both in the Korean and Andean mythical conceptions, the family home serves as a kind of secure centre, an ordering axis of reality. If it is violated, it is all but to the same effect when the parents are eliminated. The descendant children Willkas play the role of heroes when their flight and subsequent ascent to the overworld reconstitutes the universe, in observance of unalterable principles.

In some versions of the Korean story, three children turn up, but in many others there are only two, an older brother and a younger sister, as in our text below (in appendices). The story with three children says that the youngest is eaten by the tiger, which means the brother and sister are protagonists of the story, who in turn symbolise *yin* and *yang*. They will grow or perfect themselves to be the sun and moon, overcoming difficulties in a similar way to Willkas. Twins frequently appear in Latin American myths, to represent the duality of the universe. In our Korean story, they are brother and sister so that they undoubtedly signify duality.

Figure 2
The tiger asks the single mother for rice cakes. A postage stamp issued on 5 January 1970 by the Korean government.

The trickster, predator or victimiser

In a myth or folk tale, the trickster is also situated at the core of the story. The plot itself is unravelled actually in the antagonism or confrontations between the main heroes and the trickster. In the case of the Andean story, Wakon takes the trickster's part. He has not been interpreted enough in the corresponding ethnographies, so we need to turn to the new Andean linguistics. Wakon was considered an ancient divinity, who was displaced by Pachakamaq (Gutiérrez de Santa Clara 1905). With the latter's help, new men and animals arose to replace others who had been exiled to the Antisuyu region (the jungle east of the Andean territory). Wakon could not persuade Pachamama into living with him. That is why he murdered her and intended to do the same with her children, the Willkas. Then and there, the *waka* was a pilgrimage centre where the *capacocha* (*qhapaq hucha*, or the human sacrifice mainly of children and pubescents)

Figure 3
A Peruvian Dance of Wakon. You can see the feline motif on Wakon's cape.
Photo by *Andina*, Peruvian News Agency 2 January 2017.

was executed. The *capacocha* are also pronounced as *cachawako* and *cachawi* (Molina 1989, 128; Albornoz 1989, 196–197). It is, then, not only pertinent but feasible, from many angles, to suppose that Wakon was a sacrificer of the *capacocha* in the *waka* of Lurín, in a time prior to the establishment of the new cult of Pachakamaq. When the Willkas fled from the *waka* of Lurín, it amounts to a denial of sacrificial offerings to him, now a defenestrated deity.

In Korean folk tales, in contrast, a nameless tiger takes on the trickster's role. Tigers are familiar in the Korean imagination. They appear frequently – more than any other animal in Korean traditional folklore. Koreans are ambivalent towards the tiger. It is respected and feared at the same time. Koreans have made various psychological attempts to soften their fear of the tiger by personifying it with its bravery and nobility in their imagination. Tigers are sometimes replaced with wolves in other cultures. Korean tigers, personified, now smoke like humans and now climb up the tree or rope, as in our story. Moreover, Koreans traditionally worshipped the tiger as associate of the mountain god. As the ruler of the mountain, sometimes the tiger himself takes the role of the mountain god 'Sangun'.

But the tiger in our story is generally stupid and greedy. It is a story in which a fearful animal of prey was made a fool of and at last fell to death. The young listener may get vicarious satisfaction, in the mechanism of this kind, surrounded by strong tiger-like, sometimes sexually assaultable, male adults. For the proverb has it that there is always a way out if you keep your head on straight among tigers.

The tiger ate up the children's mother, just like Wakon. In the Andean story, Wakon fails to seduce her and gets to eat her. In the Korean version, the tiger asks her first for a rice cake, then another cake and another again, until she has none left. Then he asks for a piece of clothing, then another piece, until she is completely undressed. We can interpret that the tiger, when eating the rice cakes, is symbolically seizing offerings that do not belong to him. In the end, the tiger asks for a part of the body, then another, until her entire body is eaten. In this way, the listener's fear increases to the fullest. This is evidently a metaphor for human sacrifice, also with a sexual implication, offered to the mountains or to any other powerful deities. In both versions of our story, sexuality is confusingly replaced with appetite, perhaps considering young listeners are mainly targeted.

After having eaten the mother, Wakon and the tiger try to deceive the children into becoming their prey too. The children, in both stories, also face powerful enemies who have a good command of tricks. Tricksters or perpetrators pretend to be the mother. In the Andean myth, the children can eliminate the antagonist with their collaborators' help. In the Korean one, the sky, which the Andeans

Figure 4
A Korean dancer with a tiger's mask and a shotgun.
Photographer/Collection: Korean National Folklore Museum.

would call Pachakamaq, kills the enemy, leaving proof of this heavenly punishment on the red sorghum with the bloodstain of the tiger rushing down from the sky.

The cosmic rope and the transit between worlds

The monster Wakon failed only to seduce the widow Pachamama but devoured parts of her body. The Willkas could no longer find their mother, who Wakon said went far away but would soon return. The heartbroken children had Waychaw visit themselves. Waychaw was an ominous bird that announces both the sunrise and somebody's imminent death. It informed the Willkas that their mother had died and that they, in similar danger, must flee. They did as instructed, not without first tying the monster by its hair to a huge *wanka* ('stone' or 'rock').

The Willkas were thoughtful children. Later, unexpectedly, they had a rope, or *waska*, lowered from the sky. The grandmother Añas ('fox' or 'skunk') advised them to climb up the rope. Both the twin brother and sister reached the empyrean heaven, where the great god Koniraya Wiraqocha ('the dispeller of darkness') was waiting for them. Huarochirí myths position the Pachakamaq area in a peripheral realm and the 'Koniraya Wiraqocha' and 'Pariaqaqa' *wakas* in the centre of the empyrean heaven.

Pachakamaq, then, would be the personification of *Urin*, the region below, and Wiraqocha (assimilated to the sun) that of *Hanan*, the region above. The children of Pachakamaq found a way to climb up to the overworld and became the sun and the moon, two powerful existences that would establish mutually complementary dominion in the cycles of nature. Even with the pronounced hierarchies, when the male Willka becomes the sun and the female the moon, the twins travel strictly in their allotted time. This very conception is endorsed when we observe the sky day and night. The sun is the star with the greatest brightness in our planetary system, while the moon is the closest celestial body to us as the only natural satellite of the earth. The sun is four hundred times bigger than the moon, but it is also four hundred times farther away. This is why both celestial bodies span approximately the same solid angle for an observer on earth, competing in size.

Also in the Korean story, the two children first climb the tree (in a sense, this tree works as the *axis mundi*). But when the tiger climbs the tree after them, the children on the treetop pray to heaven to lower a rope, by which they climb to heaven. The tiger, again after them, prays to heaven without hiding his cunning intention. The sky, analogously in the role of the Andean Pachakamaq or Wiraqocha, lowers a rope again but a rotten one this time.

Figure 5
In these images of the Moche Monumental Frieze (100 CE to 800 CE) are two equinoctial ropes: on the big rope are two foxes, and on the small are two anthropomorphic characters (the sun and the moon), one with a headdress or crown. (Sánchez Garrafa, *Cosmos Moche* 2012, 89)

Now the tiger falls down to earth while climbing up.

What attracts our attention here is that, in both stories, the protagonists ascend to heaven with the help of the heavenly rope as a variant of the *deus ex machina* motif. In mythology, the cosmic tree is frequently used as a connector between heaven and earth, similar to the sky rope in Nuer or Tibetan myth. Of course, in the Korean and Andean stories, the rope is employed to connect the two worlds, but the twins or two siblings climb up the rope to become the sun and the moon.

The rope is lowered from heaven with three hidden implications: the connector, insecurity and verticality. First, the heavenly rope serves as a connector between heaven and earth. The most important part about this cosmic view is the way they envisaged the link between the earth and the sky in primordial times. In Andean folk tales, foxes take this role sometimes instead of humans.

In later times, when this link was lost, people were forced to resort to other resources such as shamanic intervention to restore it occasionally. Second, if you take the rope, it always involves danger – according to your intentions or life up to now. Third, the rope, lowered from the sky, also draws our attention to verticality, that is, a hierarchy that orders stratified dimensions in superimposed worlds.

Among other peoples, Koreans and Andeans revered their ancestors. The Korean society is vertically hierarchical. Also, since ancient times, Andeans have divided their society into *Hanan* (above) and *Urin* (below), with the prevalence of the solar or male half in the hierarchical society. In both societies the ancestors, above in heaven, were believed to pull the rope for their posterity.

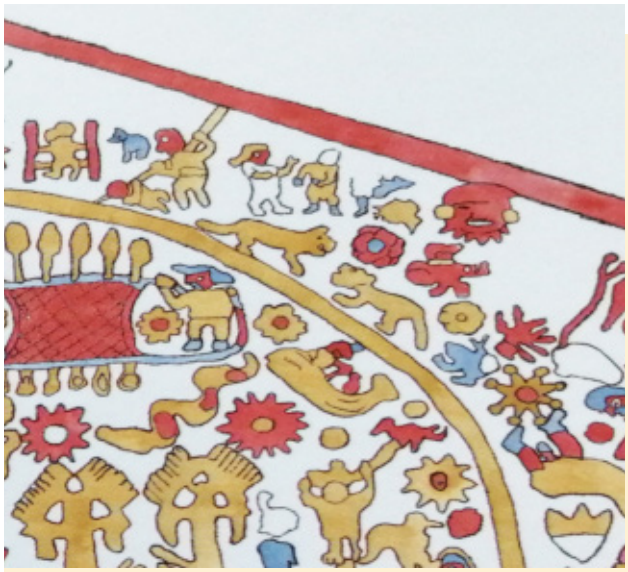

Figure 6
Detail: the fox descending from the sky meets the one climbing up from earth on the rope.

Figure 7
The sky lowered a rotten rope for the tiger, who fell to the ground. A postage stamp issued on 5 January 1970 by the Korean government.

Conclusion

In the Andean myths, the sun and moon twins were characters linked to anthropomorphised gods. The myth itself seems to have archaic antecedents, traceable from the pre-ceramic period onwards. Wakon, the ceremonial sacrificer, can be seen as a lineal descendant of the characters represented in the zeolites such as Lanzón Tello and Stela Raimondi. The central character from the Kuntur Wasi ruins (Cajamarca, 1100 BC) has two infants on his knees in an act of 'presentation'. Penetrating to a historical depth of three thousand years or more (Onuki 2008), we perceive in both the Korean and Andean narratives that the archaic world visions are echoed in the typically shamanic conceptions and observance of the natural order, based on duality and cyclicality.

In our two cross-cultural stories, the definitive configuration of reality passes through the mediation. Our two Andean protagonists, born as children of the underground world (Pachamama or the feminine part of the earth), come to be transcendental in the end, ascending to the overworld, through the principles of complementary duality and balance between the two in the cosmos. The substantive opposites are the overworld and the underworld, and the rope works as the cosmic bridge. In addition, the two male and female children in the Korean story suggest the possibility of a mythological incest, which can be a way of symbolically solving the problem of the generation of primordial human offspring. In the Andean version, contrariwise, the twins are just collaborating as brother and sister. Their bond is limited to a symbolic connection, when they left the same *paqarina* ('the place of origin'), belonging to the same half in a social organisation and declaring themselves merely to be ritualistic brother and sister. The issue of incest hardly has any relevance in this case. It might be noted that the incest in the Tawantinsuyu of the Incas (14th to 16th centuries AD) was not only allowed but also prescribed for the ruling class in order to preserve the royal lineage (Children of the Sun or *Intiq Churinkuna*).

Mythical accounts, particularly concerning the creation of the universe and humanity, explicitly justify sacrifices and offerings. The structural associations, in the analysis of myths, clarify the modalities of certain ritual practices. According to the evidence, the human sacrifice primarily affected children who were destined to be buried alive and sometimes dismembered, although the Korean tale mitigates the sacrifice by turning it into a process of initiation.

In the original Andean ideas of the cyclical alternation between day and night, light and darkness circulate each other just like threads wrap and unfold in a skein. But only from the sustained Christian evangelisation in the 16th century did they come to understand it as a triumph of good over evil. Similarly, Confucian thinkers in Korea elaborated on the Chinese philosophical ideas of encouraging good and renouncing evil, but the conception of duality and cosmic balance had been in Koreans' thought long before Confucianism was introduced in the Korean peninsula.

ENDNOTES

* This work was supported by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea and the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF-2019S1A6A3A02058027)

REFERENCES

- Albornos, Cristóbal. 1989. 'Instrucción para descubrir todas las guacas del Piru y sus camayos y haziendas' [1581–1585]. *Fábulas y mitos de los incas* , edited by H. Urbano y P. Duviols. Madrid: Historia 16: 135–198.
- Arroyo Aguilar, Sabino. 2004. 'Los mitos como huellas del tiempo y contacto intercultural.' *Revista de Antropología*, Año 2, no. 2. Lima:UNMSN: 121-141.
- Choi, Won Oh. 2008. *An Illustrated Guide to Korean Mythology*. Leiden: Brill.
- Eeckhout, Peter. 2004. 'Relatos míticos y prácticas rituales en Pachacamac'. *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'études andines* 33, no. 1. Lima: Institut Français d'Études Andines: 1–54.
- Gutiérrez de Santa Clara, Pedro. 1905. *Historia de las guerras civiles del Perú* [1549–1603], Tomo III. Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suárez: 261–320.
- Il-Yeon. 1972. *Samguk Yusa: Legends and History of the Three Kingdoms of Ancient Korea* [1512], edited by Mintz and translated by Tae-Hung Ha. Seoul: Yonsei University Press.
- Johansson Keraudren, Patrick. 1994. 'Análisis estructural del mito de la creación del sol y de la luna en la variante del códice florentino'. *Estudios de cultura Náhuatl,* Nº 24. Mexico, D. F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México: 93–123.
- López de Gomara, Francisco. 1941. *Historia General de las Indias* [1552]. Madrid: Espasa Calpe.
- Ludena Restaure, Hugo. 2012. 'Mito e imagen de los gemelos heroicos en el mundo andino'. *Tipshe: Revista de la Facultad de Humanidades*, Año XII, Nº 9. Lima: Universidad Nacional Federico Villareal: 209–223.
- Molina, Cristóbal de. 1989. 'Relación de la fábulas y ritos de los Ingas'[1574]. *Fábulas y mitos de los incas,* edited by H. Urbano y P. Duviols. Madrid: Historia 16: 47–134.
- Onuki, Yoshio. 2008. 'La iconografía en los objetos del sitio de Kuntur Wasi.' *Boletín de Arqueología,* N.° 12. Lima: PUCP: 203–218.
- Sanchez Garrafa, Rodolfo. 1999. *Wakas y Apus de Pamparaqay*. Lima: Optimice.
- Sánchez Garrafa, Rodolfo, Roberto Ochoa Berreteaga, Lyda Casas Salazar and Camilo Dolorier Torres. 2012. *Cosmos Moche: Colección Enigmas del Antiguo Perú*. Lima: Museo Andrés del Castillo.
- Santillán, H. De. 1879. 'Relación del origen, descendencia, política y gobierno de los Incas' [1563]. *Tres Relaciones de Antigüedades Peruanas*. Madrid: Ministerio de Fomento: 1–133.
- Son, Jin Tae. 1987. 'The Korean Folktale of the Sun and the Moon'. *A Study of Korean Folklore*. Seoul: Ullyumunwhasa:155–157.
- Taylor, Gerald. 1987. *Ritos y tradiciones de Huarochirí del siglo XVII*. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos and Instituto Francés Estudios Andinos.
- Toro Montalvo, César. 1990. 'Wakon and the Willkas'. *Mitos y leyendas del Perú*. Lima: AFA Editores: 11–13.
- Villar Córdova, Pedro. 1933. 'Folklore de la provincia de Canta.' *Revista del Museo Nacional*. Tomo II. Lima: Museo Nacional del Perú: 161–179.

Appendices

The Brother and Sister Who Became Sun and Moon

(Korean folk tale)

Once there lived a brother and a sister, Haesik and Dalsun, with their widowed mother. They lived a poverty-stricken life far away in a mountainous valley. In order to survive with her young children, the mother had to do odd jobs for households in neighbouring villages.

One day she was asked to work for a banquet in a distant town. When leaving for the work, she said to the children, 'Hasik and Dalsun, today I am going to work at a house crossing over twenty hills from here. So I'll be back late at night. When it gets dark, close the door tight. And don't open it to anyone until I get back'.

The children nodded and said goodbye to their mother. And she walked away waving her hands back to them. In a while it got dark and the night fell early in the mountain. Still the mother did not come home.

The younger sister Dalsun said to Haesik, 'I'm so afraid and hungry, Brother. Why is Mum so late?'

The boy said to set her at ease, 'Mum went to work over twenty hills away from here. She must be late for that. Let's be patient!'

In town, on the other hand, it was already dark when the mother finished the work. She was given some rice cakes for her help at the banquet. She packed them with pleasure, wondering how much the hungry children would like them. With the heavy rice cakes on her head, she hurried on her way home. She was walking in great fear, when she heard wild animals howling and crying far and near on winding mountain paths. But she encouraged herself thinking of her hungry children at home. However, while she was crossing a hill, she came face to face with a huge tiger that leaped suddenly out of darkness and stood in her way. Sniffing her around, the tiger said, 'What are you carrying on your head?'

The mother had no choice but to answer that they were rice cakes for the hungry children.

The tiger approached her threateningly and said, 'I'm also famished, but I will not devour you if you give me a piece of cake'.

She gave one to him right away and ran off on her way.

As she walked over the second hill, the tiger turned up again and threatened her in the same way. The scene was repeated up to the nineteenth hill. But she already had cakes run out. The tiger then gave a terrible roar of anger, when she said that she had no more cakes with her. The tiger would not listen to her pleas, but he swallowed her at a gulp.

Still, the big tiger did not fill up his massive stomach when he saw a light in a little house over the twentieth hill. He approached it. There he found the children waiting with totally no idea of what had happened to their mother. Now the tiger knocked on the door noisily. He said in the mother's imitated voice, 'Open the door, children. It's your Mum'.

'At last, Mum's home,' said the younger sister.

But the elder brother was clever enough not to be easily deceived. He said inside, 'Show your hand through the gap in the door, if you're our Mum'.

When they saw a forepaw of the tiger's, they were so terrified but acted calmly. They escaped noiselessly through the back door and climbed up a tall tree next to the well in the back garden. The tiger then searched all over the house and gardens. At last he came to the well and looked in. When he saw their reflections on the water, he asked them how they get down.

Feeling safe on the treetop, the younger girl laughed at the tiger.

Now the tiger found the children up in the tree and said in a soft voice, 'Children, how did you climb so high?'

The clever boy came up with another trick to outwit the silly tiger. He said, 'We put some sesame oil on our hands'.

The fierce but foolish tiger went to the kitchen and smeared his four feet with oil. Now again and over he tried to climb up only to slip down hopelessly.

At the sight of the tiger's vain effort, the children felt relieved and safe again. The younger sister whispered to her brother, 'What a silly tiger! He does not realise how to climb up. It'll be easy to climb if you strike the trunk with an axe, isn't it?'

The tiger, with a keen ear, heard their whisperings and immediately found an axe in the barn. Now wielding the axe on the large tree trunk and climbing up with great strides, he licked his lips with a pleasant expectation of feasting two children.

Terror-stricken, the children burst out crying. But the boy regained himself soon enough and began to pray towards the heaven with all his heart, 'Oh, God, if

you want to save our lives, send us a rope!'

Upon his prayer, a solid straw rope came down. The two children, suspended on it, disappeared into the clouds.

The tiger was frustrated, but did not give up. He also prayed aloud, 'God of heaven, have mercy on this hungry tiger. Please throw me a rope, too!'

Then another straw rope was lowered down, and the tiger happily clung to it. The rope began to climb up and up. But when it was about to disappear into the clouds, it broke apart. It was a seemingly strong but rotten rope that heaven had sent to punish him for his evil deeds. The tiger fell on a sorghum field, spilling its blood all over the field. That is why the sorghum is stained red to this day.

Now, what became of the brother and sister? Up in the sky, they became the sun and the moon that respectively shine in the day and the night. At first, the elder brother was assigned the role of the sun, and the younger sister that of the moon. But she was afraid of the dark, so that they changed their roles for the younger sister to be the sun. However, she felt shy when all people looked up at her in the day light. So she shone down strong sunlight on the earth. This is why you cannot look into the sun with eyes wide open.

Adapted from Son (1987)

Wakon and the Willkas

(Andean-Peruvian myth)

Long ago, the Heaven God Pachakamaq was married to the earth goddess Pachamama, and begat twin children, male and female, named Willkas. But he got drowned, while fighting with Wakon, in the sea of Lurín and bewitched to be an island. So the widowed Pachamama suffered many hardships with her two children.

One night the widow left Kappur with the children to seek after her husband, passing through Gasgachin from the Arma Gorge. She took a rest at the foot of the Pumaqhihuay rocks. There were monsters on the high peaks and hungry cats lurking in the ravines. But the bright firelight on the distant peak filled them with hope, for the Willkas still believed they could find their father somewhere. They reached the Wakonpahuain cavern on Reponge Hill, where a half-naked man named Wakon lived. With friendly welcome he offered them boiled potatoes in a stone pot. After the meal he ordered the twins to bring water in a cracked basin.

Meanwhile, Wakon tried to seduce the widow only to fail. Instead, he slaughtered her, gobbling up parts of her body and keeping the remainder in a large pot. When the Willkas came back and asked for their mother, Wakon angrily replied that she went far away but would return soon. The twins wept bitterly. In sympathy with them, the Waychaw bird, which announces the sunrise and the death of someone, informed them in detail of their mother's fate and also of the danger they were in. It told them to flee away from the savage Wakon, with an advice to tie his long hair to a *wanka* (stone or rock) in advance while he was asleep. They did so craftily what they were told to.

On their way to flight, the Willkas met Añas ('fox or skunk'). Upon learning of their sufferings, the compassionate Añas adopted them as her grandchildren in her burrow. In the meantime, Wakon awoke, managed to untie himself, and went out in pursuit. On the way, he asked the Puma, Condor and Amaru ('snake'), but none of them gave the twins' whereabouts. At long last, he met with the astute Añas, mother of Añacos ('young foxes or skunks'), who suggested that he go up to the hill top and sing a song pretending to be their mother so as to attract the children. But it was a trap Wakon fell into. He rolled into a gaping abyss and met with a horrible end, followed by a terrifying earthquake.

Freed from their cruel persecutor and murderer of their mother, the Willkas lived a very happy life together with their adoptive grandmother Añas. She fed them with her own blood. But the twins, fed up with their only food of blood, begged the grandmother to let them go out to the field and retrieve some potatoes buried in the ground when harvesting. Grandmother Añas granted them permission to do so. While they were entertaining themselves in their work, they found a very sweet 'oca'. Its shape of a doll caught their attention. The Willkas began to play with the 'oca', but all of a sudden it broke into several pieces. As they could not have such a toy any longer, they burst into tears. Exhausted from weeping and crying, they fell asleep on the spot. When the girl woke up, she said to her little brother of her strange dream, 'We were playing. I threw a hat into the sky, but it stayed there. Then I threw away my dresses, and there they stayed, too. What would all this mean?'

The Willkas were in deep thought when, suddenly, a *waska* (rope) descended from heaven. Añas advised them to hold it tight and climb on it. The two Willkas ascended to the empyrean, where the great God Pachakamaq was waiting for them.

There the boy Willka was transformed into the sun and the girl Willka into the moon. They continue on their journey day and night, shining on paths along which they had travelled with their unfortunate mother. On earth, however, the goddess Pachamama was bewitched to be the hill 'La Viuda' (The Widow), which is covered with the permanent snow of generating faculty, as the source of rain and the provider of water, for the sustenance of humans, plants and animals.

Likewise, the God Pachakamaq granted Añas with the bag to protect and transport their children, while the puma was rewarded to be the king of the ravines and the forest, the condor to be the lord of the heights, and the snake to defend itself with the poison as the symbol of fertility and wealth. Thus, transformed into the sun and the moon, the triumphant Willkas imposed light on the darkness or rather Wakon.

Adapted from Toro Montalvo (1990).