Drawing Through Amuya:
Andean Epistemologies and the Relational Practice of Landscape

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Abstract
This article explores how drawing, understood through Indigenous Andean epistemologies, can function as a relational and ecological practice of situated knowledge. Moving beyond the Western tradition of landscape drawing as visual capture, the article frames drawing as an embodied, metabolic process grounded in the Aymara concept of amuyt'aña, a form of thinking-feeling that unfolds through the lungs, heart, and liver, where breath, blood, and nutrients link the body directly to land and cosmos. Within this framework, the landscape does not exist as an external scene to be framed or possessed, but as a relational field that flows through and shapes the body itself.

Through Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's 'ch'ixi' concept, which holds contradictory Indigenous and colonial epistemologies together without resolution, the article examines how drawing can embrace and reveal the tensions between extractive mapping, environmental degradation, and ancestral care practices. The practice of drawing, using both local earth pigments and digital layers, traces the conflicting lines of ecological violence, political struggle, and spiritual care that converge in the contested landscapes of the Atacama Desert.

Drawing, in this sense, becomes both a practice of relational attunement and a gesture of care. It resists the desire to simplify or fix landscapes into stable representations, instead holding space for the living, breathing entanglements between bodies, land, and memory. Ultimately, the article argues for drawing as a process of staying with landscapes in transformation, aligning body, breath, and hand with their fragile, ongoing becoming.

Keywords
Amuyt'aña, Ch'ixi landscapes, Relational design, Situated knowledge, Andean epistemologies, sympoiesis.

1. Introduction– Drawing as Situated Epistemology

In architectural drawing traditions, especially lighting design, daylighting visualization, and atmospheric studies, drawing has served not only to represent the world but to register transitory light and mood, diagram time-based weather/illumination effects, and thus stabilize otherwise ephemeral phenomena on the page (Martin et al., 2020). In Western traditions, drawing has often been framed as an act of optical representation, linked to the capture of appearances and the mastery of perspective (Evans, 1997). On the contrary, within the Andean landscapes of Latin America, drawing emerges as a relational practice, structured by the epistemologies of those who inhabit and work in these territories (DeMarrais, 2017; Shapero, 2014). It becomes a practice of relational knowledge-making (De la Cadena et al., 2015; Escobar, 2016; Escobar et al., 2024), an act not just of seeing, but of being with the land, the air, the mountains, and the histories that shape them. To draw, in this context, is to participate in a web of relations, not simply to extract a view.

This article responds to the call for *Nature Drawing Nature*, which invites us to explore how drawing can become an ecological and ethical act, fostering care and awareness. It does so by placing drawing within the conceptual frameworks of Indigenous and decolonial epistemologies from the Andes, where landscape is not a passive backdrop, but a living entity entangled with human, spiritual, and nonhuman worlds. Drawing, from this perspective, does not merely depict nature—it inhabits it, metabolising the landscape through the body, breath, and hand of the drawer.

Working closely with Indigenous communities in the Atacama Desert since 2018, I have encountered ch'ixi landscapes, as described by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2015). As a non-Indigenous researcher, my engagement with this epistemological perspective is not one of cultural inheritance, but of collaborative learning. My position has been shaped through long-term relationships of trust and co-work with Likan Antai community members, based on dialogue, workshops, and participatory mapping activities. In this sense, my understanding of ch'ixi is situated: I approach it through the words, practices, and generosity of community collaborators, rather than as a claim to Indigenous knowledge. These landscapes are sites of contradiction and coexistence, where colonial and Indigenous ways of knowing, mapping, and relating to land clash, overlap, and hybridise. The act of drawing such landscapes is therefore always ch'ixi: it holds the tension between Western modes of representation and Indigenous relational epistemologies that cannot be fully reduced to image.

As Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2018) explains, within Aymara traditions in the Andes knowledge of landscape is not only visual but embodied, held in the lungs, the heart, and the liver, through the practice of amuyt'aña. This embodied, metabolic way of knowing situates the landscape not as something outside the self, but as something that circulates through breath, blood, and food, making landscape part of the body itself. Thus, to draw is to engage not just with what is seen, but with what is felt, remembered, and metabolised.

This article explores how drawing landscapes in this context becomes both an epistemic and ecological act, bridging the personal and the planetary, the bodily and the environmental. Drawing is not only a way to document ecological degradation or witness environmental change, it is a way to reimagine how we relate to landscapes, from extractive seeing to relational being. Each mark traces not just what is visible, but what breathes through us, the toxic dust of extractive industries, the ancestral winds of mountain spirits, and the fragile entanglements that hold ecosystems together.

In this sense, drawing becomes a form of ecological ethics, a way of practicing care and repair through the very act of tracing relations. In a time of ecological collapse, this slow, relational practice offers an alternative to the urgency of crisis narratives, insisting that dwelling with landscape through drawing can foster new forms of awareness, responsibility, and hope.

Figure 1 Architectural section of Caspana made in 2014 for my undergrad program in Architecture.

2. Expanded argumentation

The conceptualisation of landscape within Latin American epistemologies, particularly those shaped by Andean and Mesoamerican traditions, reveals profound tensions between Western colonial visualities and relational, embodied, and cosmological ways of being with the land. This section expands the argument that drawing can function as an epistemic practice within these relational landscapes, reimagining the act of drawing itself as a negotiation between embodied perception, cosmological orientation, and colonial visual regimes.

In Western traditions, landscape drawing historically developed alongside cartography, territorial surveillance, and colonial expansion, relying heavily on visual mastery and the separation between observer and observed. This view-from-nowhere, rooted in European traditions, extracts land into a static scene to be contemplated or possessed. In contrast, Andean relational epistemologies, such as those found in Aymara and Quechua cosmologies, do not conceptualise landscape as an objectified, visual entity at all.

As Shapero (2014) explains, there is no equivalent term for landscape in either Quechua or Aymara languages. This is not a linguistic gap, but evidence of a fundamentally different epistemological and ontological orientation. For Quechua and Aymara communities, the land is not something to be viewed from a distance, but something continuously experienced through bodily movement, breath, and ritual engagement. The mountain is not scenery—it is a relational being that orients life, provides sustenance, and mediates between humans, nonhumans, and ancestors. Spatial orientation emerges through embodied practices—walking, offering, storytelling—not from abstract observation.

This epistemological difference directly challenges the Western project of landscape drawing, which presupposes that landscape can be translated into a stable, visual representation. In the Andean context, drawing cannot claim to depict landscape as a totality, but can instead function as a situated, partial gesture within an ongoing relational process, where the drawer is implicated in what they draw. This tension is central to the ch'ixi landscape (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2015), where contradictory epistemologies, Indigenous relationality and colonial cartography—coexist without dissolving into each other.

The following sections develop this expanded argument, showing how my own drawing practice—situated in collaboration with Andean communities, embodies these tensions. Through drawing, I navigate the ch'ixi contradictions of seeing and being seen, mapping and unmapping, remembering and witnessing the interwoven ecological, political, and spiritual relations that shape Andean landscapes.

2.1 Drawing as Ch'ixi Practice

To draw a landscape in the context of the Andean desert is to step into a field of tensions, where multiple, often conflicting, epistemologies and histories converge. This is the essence of what Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2015) terms ch'ixi: a state of productive contradiction, where Indigenous and colonial ways of knowing exist simultaneously, touching without fully merging or erasing each other. Ch'ixi is a relational mode of being, one that refuses purity and embraces the unresolved tensions that define Latin American landscapes.

When I draw in the Atacama, my marks inevitably oscillate between observation and memory, between cartographic precision and embodied sensation. This oscillation is ch'ixi drawing in practice, a drawing that is never purely observational or purely symbolic, but always layered with conflicting forms of knowledge and experience. Each line registers not only a physical outline of terrain, but also the colonial histories, industrial scars, and Indigenous spiritual presences that haunt the land.

Western conventions of landscape drawing emerged from the Enlightenment's visual regimes, which sought to produce rational, objective representations of the world. These regimes rely on distance, the landscape must be framed, observed from a point removed, transformed into a scene for contemplation. But in ch'ixi drawing, there is no comfortable distance. The drawer is implicated; the body is within the landscape, marked by its dust, its wind, its

toxicity and beauty. The paper itself holds traces, not only of pigment, but of the air and water that saturate it.

This is why materials matter in ch'ixi drawing. I work with watercolours sourced from mineral pigments, some collected in the field, blending the physical matter of the landscape into the drawing itself. The paper, too, becomes a site of negotiation, sometimes torn, stained, or warped by environmental conditions. In this way, the drawing is not only a representation of landscape but a material participant in it, holding traces of both presence and absence, visibility and invisibility.

This is particularly important in contested landscapes like the Atacama Desert, where the land itself bears witness to both Indigenous lifeways and extractive violence. Mining operations, pipelines, toxic waste storage sites, all these industrial traces co-exist with ceremonial paths, ancestral water sources, and sites of ecological and spiritual care. No single drawing can "capture" these entanglements, but ch'ixi drawing can hold them in tension, refusing the erasure of one story in favour of another.

A ch'ixi drawing practice also works with layering and erasure, overlaying traces of different epistemic and material regimes. My own drawing process often begins with field sketches, quick, gestural marks that capture fleeting sensory impressions. These sketches are then overlaid with cartographic elements, lines marking ancient water flows, contemporary infrastructure, and Indigenous place names. Digital editing tools become part of this process, but never as a way of "cleaning up" the drawing. Instead, they function as another layer of negotiation, where Western techniques and Indigenous sensibilities overlap without resolution.

The refusal to resolve is key. A ch'ixi drawing does not aim for visual coherence. It allows contradictions to stand: a trace of a mining road next to a ritual offering site; a digital GPS track cutting across a hand-drawn contour of the mountain's breath. Each layer resists flattening; each mark insists on holding the gap between conflicting ways of knowing.

This refusal to resolve extends to the body of the drawer. When I draw, my hand carries not only my training in Western architectural and landscape drawing, but also the stories, gestures, and breathing rhythms I have learned from people from Caspana I have worked with. My hand pauses where they would pause, accelerates where they would walk quickly, curves to follow their gestures towards sacred peaks. In this way, the drawing holds not just my hand's movement, but the relational choreography of multiple epistemologies.

This relational choreography is central to the ecological ethics embedded in ch'ixi drawing. Rather than positioning the drawer as an outside observer, ch'ixi drawing insists on situated accountability. To draw is to acknowledge one's entanglement in the landscape's history, its present struggles, and its possible futures. The drawing becomes a record not just of what is seen, but of what it means to see from a particular position, from a body marked by colonial histories, ecological grief, and relational hope.

In the end, ch'ixi drawing does not pretend to resolve the contradictions inherent in these landscapes. Instead, it performs them, allowing the drawing to become a palimpsest of presence and erasure, of seeing and unseeing, of holding and letting go. In doing so, ch'ixi drawing offers a form of critical ecological care, one that acknowledges that the landscapes we draw are never only ours, and that drawing itself can be a practice of both witnessing and repairing broken relations.

2.3. Amuyt'aña and the Body

The Aymara concept of amuyt'aña offers a radical shift in how we conceptualise knowledge, thought, and relationality with the environment. As Rivera Cusicanqui (2018) describes, amuyt'aña is not merely intellectual reasoning or abstract reflection. It is thinking-feeling that unfolds through the upper organs, lungs, heart, and liver, where breath, blood, and metabolic processes directly connect the body to the cosmos. To think, in this context, is to process external and internal flows simultaneously. The land enters the body through breath and food, circulates through blood and is purified in the liver. Knowledge is visceral, carried in the body itself.

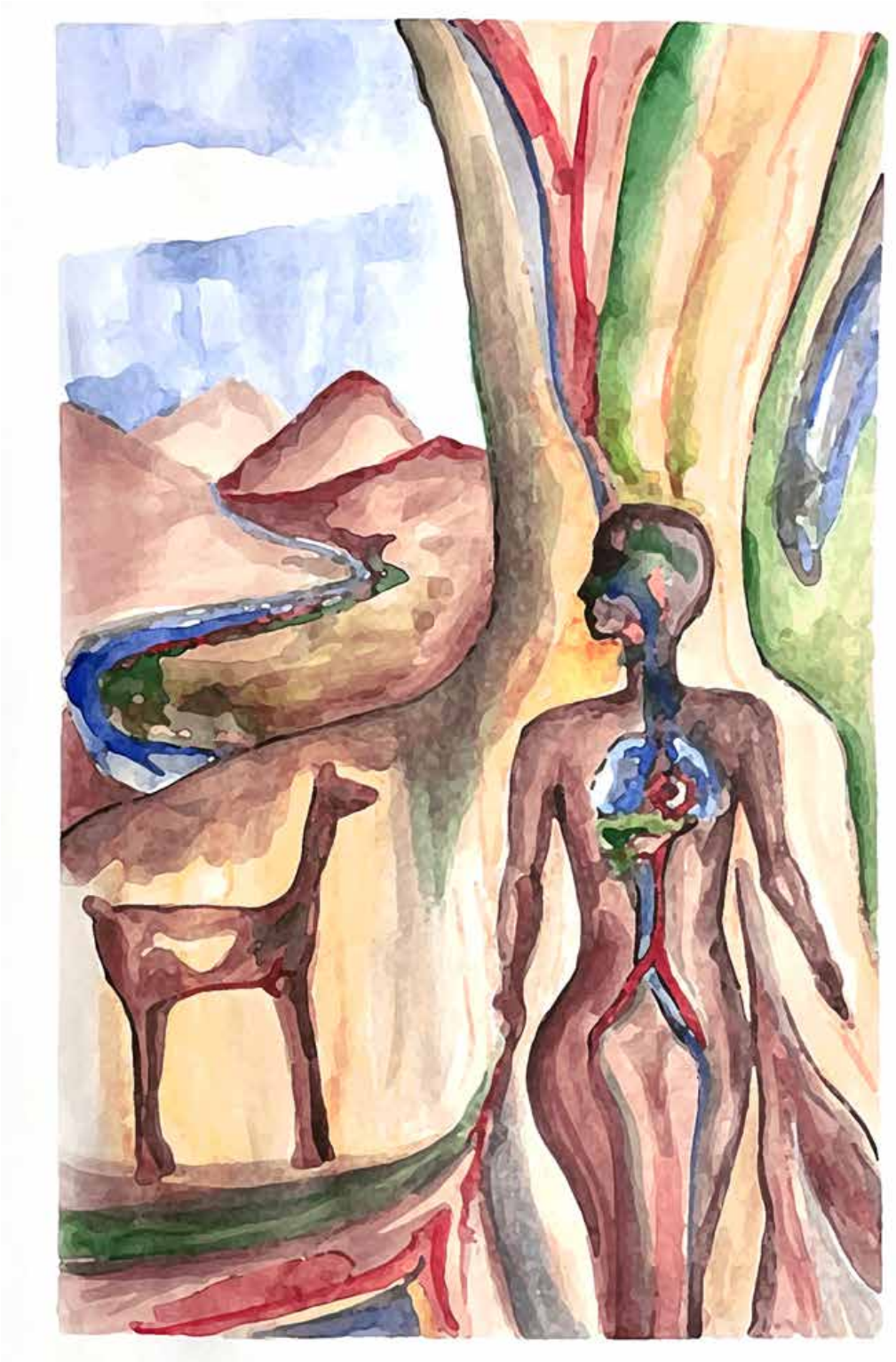

Figure 1. Personal interpretation of Amuyt'aña. Watercolour technique and Photoshop edition with brush filter. Source: Author

This understanding fundamentally reframes the act of drawing. In Western artistic traditions, drawing is typically framed as a hand-eye skill, a process rooted in visual observation and manual dexterity. But from the perspective of amuyt'aña, drawing a landscape is not a detached visual exercise, it is an embodied metabolic act. Each line, each mark, is a trace of breath, heart rhythm, and the body's negotiation with the air, temperature, and materials of the land itself.

When I draw in the Atacama Desert, I become acutely aware that my breathing syncs with the rhythms of the wind, laden with sand, salt, and chemical particles from nearby mines. My lungs register the air's dryness and toxicity. My heart responds to elevation and exertion. These bodily processes do not sit outside the act of drawing; they shape the movement of my hand, the pressure of the pencil, and the viscosity of the ink. Drawing becomes a record not just of visual observation but of the landscape's material and sensory intrusion into my body.

This relational embodiment extends to the materials themselves. Water, pigment, and paper are not neutral media but active participants in the process, mediating between my body and the land. I often mix natural pigments sourced from the desert itself, blending iron oxides, salt, and volcanic ash into the paint. Each stroke, therefore, carries the materiality of the land into the visual field, dissolving the separation between drawing surface and landscape. The paper becomes a membrane, holding traces of contact between my breath, my hand, and the land's body.

In this way, amuyt'aña offers a methodology for decolonial drawing practice, one that refuses the separation between body and land, between observer and environment. Drawing becomes a practice of reciprocity, a material dialogue between the drawer's body, the landscape, and the materials that mediate their encounter.

This approach also challenges the temporality of drawing. In amuyt'aña, knowledge does not emerge instantaneously. It must be breathed, metabolised, processed over time through bodily sensation and reflection. My drawing practice, therefore, unfolds slowly, returning to the same landscape, retracing lines, layering new marks over old ones. Each layer records not only visual observation but also the changing metabolic relationship between my body and the land over time.

Ultimately, drawing through amuyt'aña is not about fixing a stable view of the landscape. It is about holding open a space for relational knowledge to emerge, knowledge that is partial, embodied, and always in motion, carried not only in the hand but in the lungs, heart, and liver.

2.4. Drawing as Nooscape

The concept of nooscape, developed by Rahder (2020), offers a critical lens for understanding how knowledge, land, and practice continually co-produce one another in situated, contingent ways. A nooscape is not a map in the conventional sense, nor is it a purely conceptual framework. It is a field of relations, where epistemic practices, drawing, walking, storytelling, mapping, generate knowledge that is always in flux, responding to ecological changes, political conflicts, and embodied experiences. In the context of Latin American landscapes, where Indigenous relational epistemologies, extractive industrial logics, and scientific environmental knowledge constantly overlap and contradict one another, the nooscape becomes a vital concept for understanding how knowledge is not just situated, but contested and co-produced through action.

In my own drawing practice, I have come to understand that the landscapes I work within, the desert territories of the Atacama and adjacent Andean foothills, are not reducible to visual scenery. They are nooscapes: unstable fields where knowledge is made, contested, and undone through the daily practices of living, working, remembering, and imagining. Drawing, then, is not a secondary act of representation, but part of the process through which nooscapes take form and transform. Each time I draw, I enter into a conversation with layers of past knowledge production, Indigenous spatial stories, colonial surveys, corporate environmental impact assessments, and my own embodied experience of walking, breathing, and sensing the land.

This understanding radically shifts what it means to draw a landscape. In Western artistic traditions, drawing is often framed as a means of capturing external reality, fixing a view onto a surface. In nooscape thinking, by contrast, drawing does not capture, it participates. It is part of the ongoing negotiation between knowledge, land, and action. This is especially crucial in the Atacama, where landscape is not only a site of ecological processes but also a field of political struggle. Conflicts over water rights, extractive industry impacts, and Indigenous territorial claims all leave their traces on the land—and these traces, in turn, enter the drawing, whether through direct inscription (mapping sites of extraction and resistance) or through the invisible pressures that shape what can and cannot be drawn.

In my work, I often layer multiple drawing techniques, field sketches, annotated maps, digital overlays, into a single composite image. Each layer corresponds to a different form of knowledge, and these layers are not fully reconciled. This refusal to flatten or harmonise the contradictions is deliberate. In a ch'ixi nooscape (drawing directly informed by Rivera Cusicanqui's (2015) work), Indigenous, scientific, and corporate ways of knowing are held together in tension, touching without erasing each other. This relational, multi-layered process is not only about conflict, it is also about the creative emergence of new forms of knowledge through the very act of layering, comparing, and negotiating conflicting traces. Each drawing session, whether done in the field or back in the studio, is a form of nooscape-making, where new connections between stories, marks, and meanings emerge—not because I impose them, but because the drawing process itself reveals their relationality.

Nooscapes also insist on the temporality of knowledge production. A landscape does not exist all at once; it emerges through time, through repeated acts of dwelling, drawing, walking, and remembering. Each drawing I make is thus not a finished product, but a temporal fragment—one moment in the evolving nooscape, which will shift as more stories, more erasures, and more struggles shape the land. This helps explain why so many of my drawings remain open-ended—unfinished edges, partially erased lines, ambiguous transitions between foreground and background. These are not stylistic choices, but epistemic commitments to the unfinished nature of nooscapes themselves.

In this sense, drawing as nooscape practice resists the settler-colonial impulse to stabilise, fix, and claim landscape as knowable and ownable. Instead, it foregrounds contingency, relationality, and situated partiality. Each drawing is not an authoritative representation of place, but a snapshot of the relational entanglements shaping that place at a given moment—one that will inevitably shift, be redrawn, or become irrelevant as the nooscape continues to evolve.

The value of nooscape drawing is particularly clear in zones of sacrifice like the Atacama, where the landscape is heavily mediated by invisible infrastructures, underground pipelines, chemical seepage zones, historical land dispossession, and ephemeral water bodies. Much of what constitutes these nooscapes is not directly visible, it exists in memories, corporate documents, whispered stories, and the felt sense of toxicity in the air. Drawing, with its capacity to layer visible and invisible traces, becomes a tool for revealing the relational and temporal complexity of these landscapes, visualising connections that maps, diagrams, and legal documents systematically obscure.

Ultimately, drawing as nooscape is a practice of epistemic humility. It does not claim to see everything, nor does it aim to reconcile contradictions into a harmonious whole. Instead, it holds open the messy, uneven, contradictory processes through which landscapes, and knowledge about them, are continually made and remade. In this way, drawing becomes a situated, ethical practice, acknowledging both the limits of what I can know and the responsibility to trace relations that dominant knowledge systems would prefer to keep invisible.

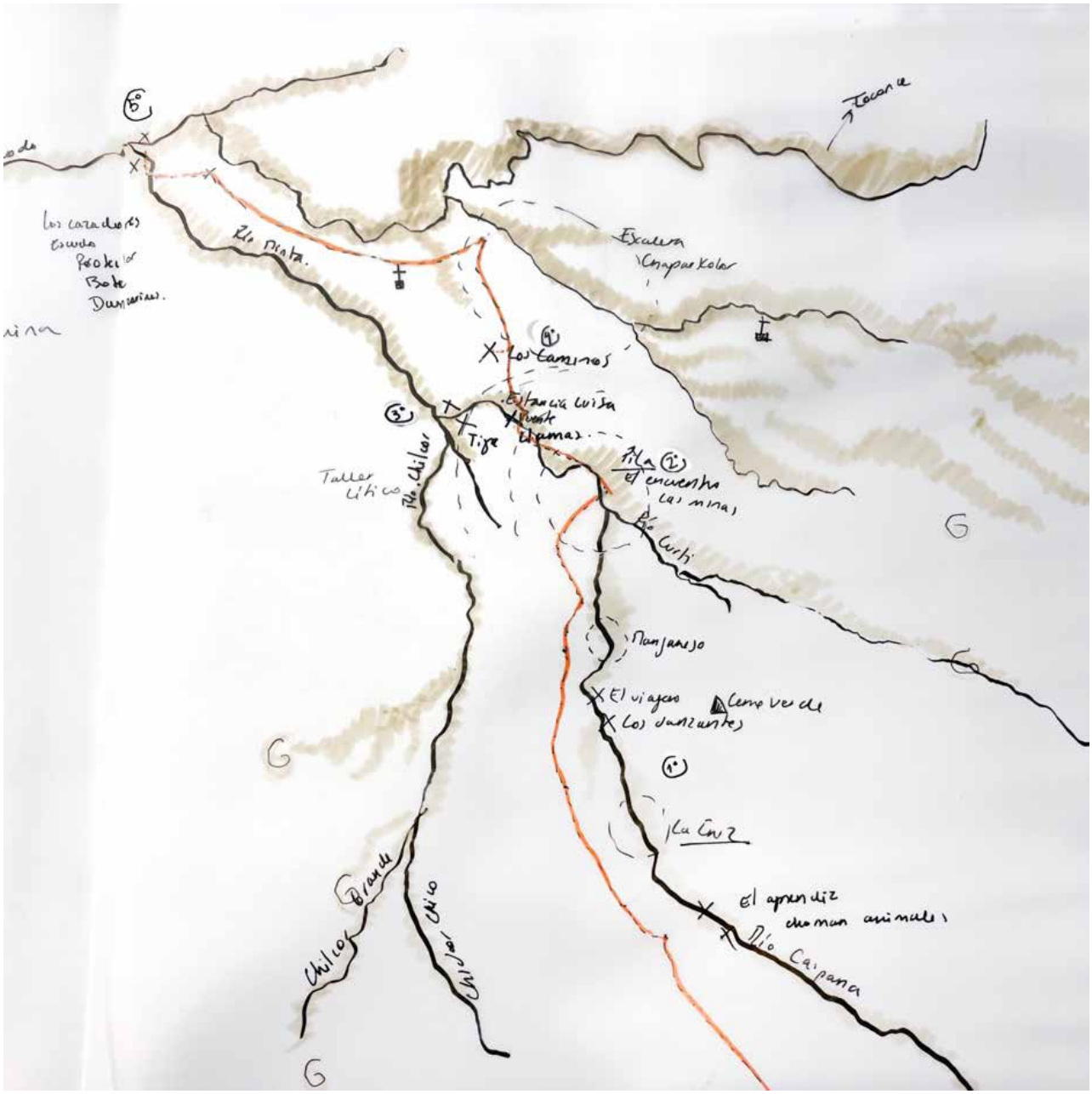

Figure 2. Memory Map of ravines and rockart. In orange is the road we took in the car from Caspana to those sites. Handrawing technique over base satellite image. Source: Author

2.5. Drawing lines and Crisis Fatigue

In recent decades, environmental crises have become visually and politically overwhelming, saturating public discourse with images of disaster, collapse, and loss. In landscapes like the Atacama Desert, these crises are not distant futures or global abstractions, they unfold in daily life, shaping how communities breathe, eat, and move through their environment. Yet the demand for constant urgency, the sense that we must act immediately, fix everything now, often leads not to action, but to exhaustion and detachment. The longer crises persist, the harder it becomes to hold sustained attention.

Here, drawing as a process of line-making offers a counterpoint to the paralysis of crisis fatigue. In Tim Ingold's (2007) analysis, lines are not merely outlines or representational edges, they are traces of movement, formed through the embodied action of walking, working, or dwelling in a place. Lines record paths followed, pauses made, decisions navigated, the ongoing process of living in relation to land. To draw a landscape, then, is not to fix it in place, but to follow its lines of becoming, tracing the ways it has been shaped by both human and more-than-human forces.

This understanding of drawing as following lines rather than capturing scenes is particularly valuable when working in sacrificed landscapes, where ecological violence is ongoing, cumulative, and often invisible to the outsider's eye. When I draw in these sites, I do not approach the land as a scene of disaster to be rendered for advocacy or aesthetic contemplation. Instead, I approach it as a palimpsest of intersecting lines some visible, some obscured, some in the process of erasure. The act of drawing becomes a process of tracing these lines, following the paths of contamination, displacement, adaptation, and care that shape the land's present and future.

Drawing in this way directly challenges the visual logic of environmental crisis as spectacle those singular images of burning forests, collapsing glaciers, or oil-drenched shorelines that circulate briefly and then disappear from view. Spectacle demands immediacy and impact, compressing complex environmental histories into moments of visual shock. But as Ingold (2011, 2012, 2015) reminds us, life is not composed of static scenes it is composed of lines in motion, always in the process of being extended, redirected, or interrupted. Drawing, in this sense, resists the spectacle of collapse by insisting on the slow temporality of dwelling with landscapes over time, tracing their changing lines rather than capturing their catastrophic endpoints.

This slow practice of following lines also helps metabolize grief and crisis fatigue in ways that purely analytical or visual modes of environmental communication cannot. When I draw a riverbed altered by mining runoff, I am not simply recording contamination as data, I am tracing the material history of water's movement, the decisions that redirected its flow, and the stories of those who remember the river before its transformation. Each line I draw holds both presence and absence, the water that still flows, and the water that no longer does.

Because lines are relational traces, they also refuse the separation between the drawer and the drawn. As Ingold (2015) emphasizes, to draw is to move with the world, not stand apart from it. My own body, my breath, posture, and shifting attention, becomes part of the line. In this way, the act of drawing refuses the detachment that so often accompanies environmental despair. It keeps me physically and emotionally present, even when the landscape itself is painful to witness.

In ch'ixi landscapes, where Indigenous cosmologies, extractive infrastructures, and scientific data all leave their marks, this relational way of drawing becomes even more important. There is no single line that defines these landscapes, no master narrative that can resolve their contradictory layers. Instead, there is a multiplicity of lines, ritual paths, toxic plumes, survey grids, remembered trails, all crossing and influencing each other. Drawing is a way of holding space for these competing traces, refusing to simplify the land into a singular story of either pristine nature or environmental ruin.

By following these lines, I practice what Ingold calls correspondence, a way of moving and thinking with the

world, rather than about it. Drawing does not aim to solve or resolve the environmental crisis; it does not promise hope or closure. Instead, it insists on continuity, the ongoing act of tracing and retracing, holding attention when urgency fades.

In this sense, drawing becomes a form of endurance, a way of staying with landscapes and the crises they bear, even when attention wavers elsewhere. It acknowledges that not all crises announce themselves spectacularly and that some forms of harm, the slow poisoning of groundwater, the gradual erosion of communal knowledge, can only be traced through lines that stretch across generations.

Ultimately, drawing through lines offers a relational alternative to crisis fatigue, not by rejecting urgency, but by embedding care, attention, and endurance into the slow, bodily process of following landscapes as they live, suffer, and persist.

2.6. More-Than-Human Dialogue

To draw a landscape is never to draw alone. Every mark made on the page, every line, every texture, every wash of pigment, is a dialogue with forces beyond the human hand. This is particularly true in the Andean and Atacama landscapes, where mountains, winds, and waters are not inert backdrops, but active presences with stories, agency, and claims of their own. In the relational epistemologies of the Andean world, humans do not act on the land; they act with it. Mountains, rivers, and winds are ayllu kin, entangled with human communities in reciprocal relationships of care and respect. Drawing within this context means acknowledging that the land is not just the subject of the drawing, it is a collaborator, an interlocutor, a co-creator of what appears on the page.

The materials themselves also participate in this dialogue. When I draw with local earth pigments, those pigments carry with them the chemical memory of the place, its mineral composition, its history of extraction and erosion, its encounters with rain and drought. The way they flow, resist, or settle on the paper is not purely under my control. It is shaped by the properties of the earth itself, responding to humidity, temperature, and the uneven texture of the paper's surface. This more-than-human dialogue is not abstract. It unfolds in the very mechanics of drawing, the way the brush hesitates or skips when the wind picks up, the way paper warps in the presence of salt air, the way pigments refuse to blend if the water carries traces of metal or chemical contamination. Drawing, in this sense, is a process of listening with the body and with the materials themselves.

Such approach aligns closely with Donna Haraway's concept of sympoiesis (2016), where knowledge and creation are always co-produced through ongoing relationships between human and non-human actors. My drawings do not emerge from my hand alone. They emerge from the choreography between my body, the land, the weather, and the materials, all responding to each other in real time. To draw this way is to refuse the fantasy of mastery, the belief that the landscape can be fully captured or controlled through visual representation. Instead, it acknowledges that every drawing is partial, contingent, and dependent on the willingness of the land to be seen, the paper to hold, and the air to allow. Finally, drawing becomes a practice of ecological humility, a way of approaching the land not as a detached observer, but as a participant in a more-than-human conversation. The drawing itself becomes evidence of this conversation, a material trace of human and non-human entanglement, visible in the very texture of the mark.

3. Conclusions

The act of drawing, when reframed through the epistemology of amuya and the practice of amuyt'aña, is no longer a technique for capturing external landscapes but a way of situating oneself within the ongoing relational exchanges between body, land, and cosmos. Through this lens, drawing is not a personal artistic act, nor is it an aesthetic exercise in representation; it is a practice of correspondence (Ingold, 2015), metabolic sensing, and relational care.

To draw from the lungs, heart, and live, to draw through chuyma, is to acknowledge that the landscape does not exist at a distance, outside the body, to be framed or consumed by the eye. The landscape enters the body

through breath, circulates as blood, and is purified by the organs that link interior and exterior worlds. This relational flow reveals that knowing the land is not an intellectual activity alone, it is a continuous exchange between body and world, mediated through sensation, sustenance, and movement.

Drawing within this relational field means moving with the land, rather than imposing visual order onto it. Each line traces not a fixed boundary or topographic contour, but a pathway of movement, memory, and entanglement. These lines do not seek to fix the land into a static object; they remain open to the flows of air, water, and life that continually reshape Andean landscapes. In this sense, drawing-as-amuya becomes a method of relational attunement, aligning bodily rhythms with the shifting, breathing landscape itself.

This reorientation is particularly crucial in the context of ch'ixi landscapes (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2015), where contradictory epistemologies, Indigenous relational knowing, extractive scientific mapping, and colonial visual regimes, coexist without resolution. Drawing as amuyt'aña practice resists the desire to harmonize these contradictions into a seamless representation. Instead, it holds them in tension, tracing both the ecological harm inflicted by industrial expansion and the fragile persistence of ancestral care practices that endure beneath and alongside that harm.

As an embodied practice, drawing also resists the visual extractivism embedded in many Western environmental visual cultures, which treat landscapes as scenes to be captured, possessed, and circulated. By rooting drawing in breath, metabolic exchange, and bodily orientation, the practice of drawing-as-amuya refuses detachment. It insists on the ethical entanglement of the drawer with what is drawn. This entanglement does not imply mastery or possession, but reciprocity, the recognition that the land draws back, shaping the hand as much as the hand shapes the mark.

At the same time, drawing as amuyt'aña reconnects ecological knowing to the body's vulnerability. In landscapes like the Atacama, where contamination, extraction, and displacement saturate both land and lungs, every breath is a form of ecological knowledge. Drawing from chuyma acknowledges that knowledge emerges not only from visual observation, but from the slow, accumulative work of sensing the land through lungs that filter dust, hearts that register altitude, and stomachs that metabolize the food grown from increasingly depleted soils. In this way, the body itself becomes an archive of environmental history — a living, breathing record of the land's transformations.

This embodied epistemology does not offer a singular visual truth about the landscape. It offers a practice of attention, care, and endurance. To draw through amuya is to accept that the land's story can never be fully seen or known — it can only be partially traced through the ephemeral, fragile, and situated marks of bodies in motion, breathing and becoming alongside the land.

Ultimately, drawing as amuyt'aña is not a method for fixing landscapes into knowable objects. It is a practice for staying with their transformations, aligning body, breath, and hand with the rhythms of lands that are always more than visual, always more than human. In the face of extraction, crisis, and erasure, this practice offers no solutions — only a way to hold attention open, to follow the lines of relation and rupture, to breathe with the land, even when the air itself is thick with harm.

Conflict of Interests and ethics

The author declares no conflict of interest. The author also declares full adherence to all journal research ethics policies, namely involving the participation of human subjects anonymity and/ or consent to publish."

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