



LINEAGE *APU* PROCESS READINGS

These are stories offered by Bonnie Glass-Coffin and Robin Van Loon, compiled by Judy Hoaglund

1. *Apu Ausangate*

Ausangate is one of the most powerful mountains of Peru. This *Apu* is an ascended master of the highest degree. He ascends to the sky world at least once per year, responding to the call to council in the *hanaqpacha* where he takes his place as lead councilor among the 12 *Apukuna* of our lineage. There they commune directly with all the enlightened ones, as messengers between *Wiracocha* and the *runakuna*, the people. This is the *Apu* that separates the *antisuyu* from the *qollasuyu*. It is the Cusco region's final mountain on the eastern extreme of the Andes, before the mountains give way to the lowland Amazonian forests. East and northeast of *Ausangate* lies the jungle. Southeast is the *altiplano*, the high tundra plateau of the *qollasuyu*, and Lake Titicaca. It is the principal *Apu* of the Q'ero peoples. Like most of the *Apukuna*, *Ausangate* is home to several important highland lakes, "ojos de agua" (eyes of water) available for ritual communion with the *Apu*. The peak, or head, of *Ausangate*, is at almost 21,000 ft. elevation. It is said that when the glaciers of *Apu Ausangate* are no more, this world will end, and the time of the new world will begin. This is *Apu Ausangate*.

2. *Apu Salkantay*

At more than 20,000 ft., *Salkantay* is the highest peak in the *Cordillera Vilcanota*, lying west of Cusco. The *Chakana*, or southern cross stands immediately above the summit of *Salkantay* at the height of the rainy season. This very special alignment between the star guides of the southern cross and *Apu Salkantay* has created a special bond between this Ascended Master and the *runakuna* because of the relationship between this *Apu* to rain and fertility. *Apu Salkantay* is one of the principal deities controlling weather and fertility in the region west of Cuzco. It is often called "the wild one," (*Salka* means wild or invincible) probably because it governs weather patterns in the whole region west of Cusco. In his majesty, *Apu Salkantay* shines down on *Machu Picchu*, the Inkas final retreat, and is revered as guardian of the jungle. This *Apu* has been instrumental to the *runakuna* who depend upon the continued flow of water for all good things. *Apu Salkantay* has the wonderful position of governing two of the most important river valleys of the Cusco region: the lower *Urubamba* River and the *Apurimac* River. This is *Apu Salkantay*.

3. *Apu Pachatusan*

Pachatusan means "the staff of the world" or "the balance beam of the world." This is the place where the heavens rest upon the Earth. It is considered among the most important mountains in the Cusco valley. *Pachatusan* was the gateway to the *antisuyu*. Geographically, the mountain faces the Cusco valley, and gives its back to the "Sacred Valley" (*Urubamba/Vilcanota* valley). *Pachatusan* is the *Apu* that don Benito Qorihuaman worked with most closely, as he lived below it in the town of Wasao, in the Cusco valley. His relationship with *Pachatusan* has its own set of stories, as he was a



most famous *kuraq alkulleq*. The shrine of the *Señor de Huanca* is on the far side of *Pachatusan*. This is one of the most important shrines in the vicinity of Cusco, the site of many miracles. It draws thousands of pilgrims, who hike partially over *Pachatusan*, each year during its festival day. At one time, the peak of *Pachatusan* may have been permanently covered in snow, but now it can be seen white for only a few days at a time when there are snowfalls. *Pachatusan* also governs the weather patterns of the Cusco valley. Most storms swirl around the valley before dropping in, a pattern described as an *amaru* (serpent). *Pachatusan* “originates” these serpentine weather patterns. This is *Apu Pachatusan*.

4. *Apu Huanacauri*

Huanacauri is the mountain that stands across the valley from *Pachatusan*. It is much lower and its peak is much gentler than the jagged tops of *Pachatusan*. Long ago, four men and women, who were the first Inkas, emerged from *Paucaritambo*. They were sacred pairs: four brothers and four sisters, who were also husbands and wives. *Manco Capac* was their leader and his wife was *Mama Ocllo*. They moved north from Lake Titicaca, where they were born, towards the valley of Cusco, to begin the kingdom of the Inka. Just three miles south of the valley, one of the brothers sacrificed himself, by turning to stone, at a place called *Huanacauri*. This was so he could be a messenger for his people to the Gods of the Celestial Kingdom. The legend was that wherever the first Inka, *Manco Capac*, set his golden staff into the ground, and it sank into the soil without resistance, that was where the brothers and sisters should create their settlement. When they reached *Huanacauri* and saw the valley before them, *Manco Capac* threw his staff. It landed in the valley and sank into the soil, thus becoming *Qosqo* (Cusco), the city of the Inka. *Huanacauri* was an *Apu* that was continually honored by the Inkas. One of the most important tests of young men was a foot race to the top of *Huanacauri*. To this day, the community of *San Jerónimo* summits *Apu Huanacauri* and *Apu Pikol* as part of their annual tradition. Everyone from the community traces the borders of the traditional lands held by the community’s *ayllus*. This is *Apu Huanacauri*.

5. *Apu Pikol*

Pikol is clearly visible from the Cusco city center. It overlooks the entire Cusco valley. The most distinctive physical feature of *Apu Pikol* is that it has a large, round purplish crater or erosion zone right at the center of the mountain. This has been understood as the mountain’s birth canal, and from a certain angle the mountain is seen as two spread legs, with the crater as open womb. The *Apu* is seen as birthing all of Cusco. *Apu Pikol* is still revered today, as it was when the Inka first settled in Cusco, more than 700 years ago. *Pikol*, along with all the other *Apus*, holds council to intercede between the *runakuna* and the heavens, now as in ancient times. *Apu Pikol* was visited by *Wiracocha* when He walked the land in human form, before He returned to His throne in the *hanaqpacha*. This is *Apu Pikol*.



6. *Apu Illimani*

The mesa position held by *Illimani* also includes *Illampu*. *Illimani* and *Illampu* are the two largest *Apus* of Lake Titicaca. Lake Titicaca is the place of origin. It is where the world, the people, the sun and the moon were born, and it is the place of origin of the first Inka couple. The mountains around the lake are extraordinary. At times, they appear to be rising up out of the lake itself. The people of this region know that animals and people originate from, and eventually return to the Heavens through the head of the mountain. The *runakuna* consider the *Apus* as a human body, with head, and heart, trunk, and arms and legs. They know the geography of an *Apu*. Its stone structure is as are our human forms. The eyes of the mountain are its pristine lakes, the *paqarinas*. These are the exact places of emergence into the land of the living, the doorway to the Soul. The sun shines its light into these pristine pools, and from these still reflections we emerge, journeying downward as we move through life, just as the water flows from the mountain's glaciers, through the fields of our service to the world, fertilizing *Pachamama* all along the way. This is *Apu Illimani*.

7. *Apu Machu Picchu*

The name *Machu Picchu* means "ancient coca cud". This is because the mountain itself looks like the cud left after the coca leaves are completely chewed. Below this *Apu* lie the ruins of the last stronghold of the Inka, the city called *Machu Picchu*. The *runakuna* know that death claims the old, when our descent from the high places of our birth is complete. After death, still traveling with the flow of these ever-falling streams, the water that carries us flows to the underworld. The water is carrying the souls of the dead, to rest deep within the mountain, from whence we shall be born again. We return as stars that spring forth into the heavens from deep within the mountain to become the *Wilka Mayu* (sacred river), which we know as the Milky Way. That is why offerings are made to the *Apus*. They are reflections of our most enlightened Selves, even as they are our messengers to one another and to *Wiracocha*. This is *Apu Machu Picchu*.

8. *Apu Veronica (Waqay Wilka)*

Veronica is one of the peaks that forms part of the glacial cluster called *Waqay Wilka*. *Waqay Wilka* is a beautiful name. *Waqay* is "to cry" (as in "to wail") and "*wilka*" is sacred, divine, a god, etc. The reason why is that, historically, the glacial snow and ice of *Waqay Wilka* was punctuated by several dark gray boulder fields. The combination of the white snow and the dark patches of boulders created a very vivid image of a crying face. Most of the *Apu* Lords of the Andes are considered to be masculine by the *runakuna*, but a few are feminine, like Veronica. She rises wide and conical over the *Urubamba* Valley. Her ripe fields include the minerals, crops, animals and people; all are under her protection. Even those who do not live on her slopes can make contact to pray for her assistance or intervention from the *hanaqpacha*. She may also call on anyone, from near or far, who hears her whispered prayer on the wind, and who thus comes forward to serve. Like all the *Apukuna*, Veronica is a wise and loving ancestor who wants to teach about the cosmos. This is *Apu Veronica*.



9. *Apu Pitusiray-Apu Sawasiray*

Pitusiray and *Sawasiray* are a *yanantin* (sacred pair) overlooking the Sacred Valley, above the town of Calca. According to one chronicle source, at the famous *Inti Raymi* ceremonies at *Saqsaywaman*, above Cusco, part of the ceremonies included the chanting of the names of the mountain gods of the region by the Inka priests. Of all the *Apus* honored during this chanting, *Pitusiray* was the first to be named. Before *Pachatusan*, before *Ausanqate*, known to be special in the Inkas' hearts; *Pitusiray*, and then *Sawasiray*, came first. *Sawasiray* is the masculine mountain, whose wife is *Pitusiray*, the smaller of the two. But there's more to *Apu Pitusiray*. Up high on *Pitusiray* is a highland lake, *Qanqanqocha*. This lake is a sacred site. To this day people tell you not to throw a rock into the lake, as doing so will cause a snow and hail storm to fall. Above the lake a rocky outcropping was carved by Inka or pre-Inka stone workers in a such a way that for a couple days a year, in early October, this rocky outcropping casts a shadow of a feline profile, an *otorongo* or jaguar, and the profile of an Inka princess, or *ñusta*. Just days after the shadow can be seen, the community of Orqo below *Pitusiray* celebrates its annual festival of water, during which there is a ceremonial pageant whose action centers around an *otorongo* and a *ñusta*. The legend tells that these are the shadows of the spirit of the *ñusta*, *Pitusiray* and the jaguar, *Sawasiray* who were turned to stone by *Kuntisiray*, the *Apu* behind these two.

Both *Apus* are visible for great distances in the southern Andes. They are regarded as the spiritual source and the guardians of corn, as well as of many other paired concepts, including that of form and energy. They teach us the power and importance of opposites and the importance of relationship, of sacred *ayni*, in all things. These are *Apu Pitusiray-Apu Sawasiray*.

10. *Apu Qolqepunku*

Qolqepunku, in Quechua, means "silver door". Its range is home to the Lord of *Qoyllorit'i* (snow star). Every year tens of thousands of pilgrims walk a cold, stony trail to the base of an imposing glacier. Many walk barefoot, or crawl on hands and knees, as a sign of humility, in homage to an icon found in the isolated chapel that marks the end of their journey at over 16,000 feet above sea level. The Lord of *Qoyllorit'i* is an image of Christ that "miraculously" appeared on a boulder that was the site of reverent, ancient pre-Columbian rituals. It attracts those seeking cures for the incurable, blessings for marriages and baptisms, and auspicious signs to confirm good fortune in the coming year. The pilgrimage of *Qoyllorit'i* is celebrated on June 21st each year, the time of return of the Pleiades to the night sky. Glacial ice is carried from the mountain by pilgrims, who come to venerate the snow star known as *Qoyllur Rit'i*. This is more than a Catholic festival, this snow star is an earthly home to the Pleiades, and an important stop for *Wiracocha* on His earthly journey. This is *Apu Qolqepunku*.



Apu Wiracochán

Wiracochán is the protector *Apu* of Urcos, a town located near where the Cusco valley meets the *Wilkanota/Urubamba* valley. This *Apu* is related to fertility. On the mountainside and on top are stones carved into the shapes of frogs, typically a water and fertility-related animal. Frogs were used as divining instruments to tell when rain would fall. The *Apu* sits with his feet in the beautiful Urcos lake. *Wiracochán* is along the “*ruta de Wiracocha*” (the route of *Wiracocha*), and was the site of an episode in which *Wiracocha* sat down on a bench near Urcos. The bench turned to gold after He left the community. Up until the Spanish arrival, there was a large statue of *Wiracocha* sitting on a bench at that very spot, to commemorate this most important event. Lord *Wiracocha* created humanity after rising from an island in Lake Titicaca called “the island of the sun”. After this creative act, He walked across the land, performing miracles, everywhere He went, and teaching the *runakuna* how to live. He is said to have appeared as an old man with a white beard, rather than as a deity. Those who gave Him food or shelter, He rewarded. Everywhere that *Wiracocha* visited became a shrine. *Apu Wiracochán* is one of those shrines. This is *Apu Wiracochán*.

11. *Apu Pumasillo*

Pumasillo is one of the *Apus* that overlooks *Choqek'iraw* and the *Apurimac* valley. Its peak is a perfect triangle shape, and the name, in Quechua, means "puma claw". *Pumasillo* reminds us that the *Apus* come to us on our journeys as pumas, as hummingbirds, as condors, as foxes, as beautiful light beings, and as humble old men. In whatever form they come to us, they can carry us deep into the organizing principle of the *hanaqpacha*; as both our becoming and our destiny. The *Apus* are stewards who oversee the health and flow of all life on earth. Their energies can also help us in ridding aspects, or things in life that are dead, and no longer serve us. They assist us to experience the freedom and magic of spiritual flight. The *Apu-Guia*, or starguide, is simply the most mobile embodiment of the *Apu* messenger that connects the reality of light beings from the *hanaqpacha* to this *kaypacha* reality. This is *Apu Pumasillo*.