

CHOLO CITIZENS:
NEGOTIATING PERSONHOOD AND BUILDING
COMMUNITIES IN EL ALTO, BOLIVIA

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ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses the dialectic between collective and individual senses of self and political agency, and the implications of that dialectic for how residents of Rosas Pampa, in the city of El Alto, Bolivia, experience their citizenship. It examines the ways in which citizenship is performed, practiced, and constructed by rural-urban migrants living in a peripheral urban area in Bolivia, and interrogates this central concept in political theory using anthropological theories and methods. It is based upon a year's fieldwork in Rosas Pampa, a poor neighbourhood whose adult residents are predominantly first or second-generation Aymara-speaking migrants of rural origin.

In contrast to the abstract way citizenship is generally understood in the national and international context, and purveyed as a key policy by a multitude of NGOs and governmental agencies operating in poor urban areas of Bolivia, the people of Rosas Pampa experience citizenship in intensely physical and embodied ways, and within several different political spheres, at personal, local and national levels. This thesis explores the nature of political action, and highlights the values that thereby emerge to shape political agency. It argues that there is a dynamic interaction between academic and policy-based notions of citizenship and selfhood and those rooted in people's urban experiences and rural backgrounds.

The first part of the thesis outlines the citizenship practices of the residents of Rosas Pampa, and explores how they constitute themselves in various ways as collective political subjects, covering community politics, voting, the annual fiesta and religiosity. The second part focuses on citizenship as a negotiation of personhood, through exploring how relational senses of self operate in Rosas Pampa and then outlining governmental citizenship projects that seek to modify those senses of self. Throughout it emphasises the citizens' own responses to those projects.

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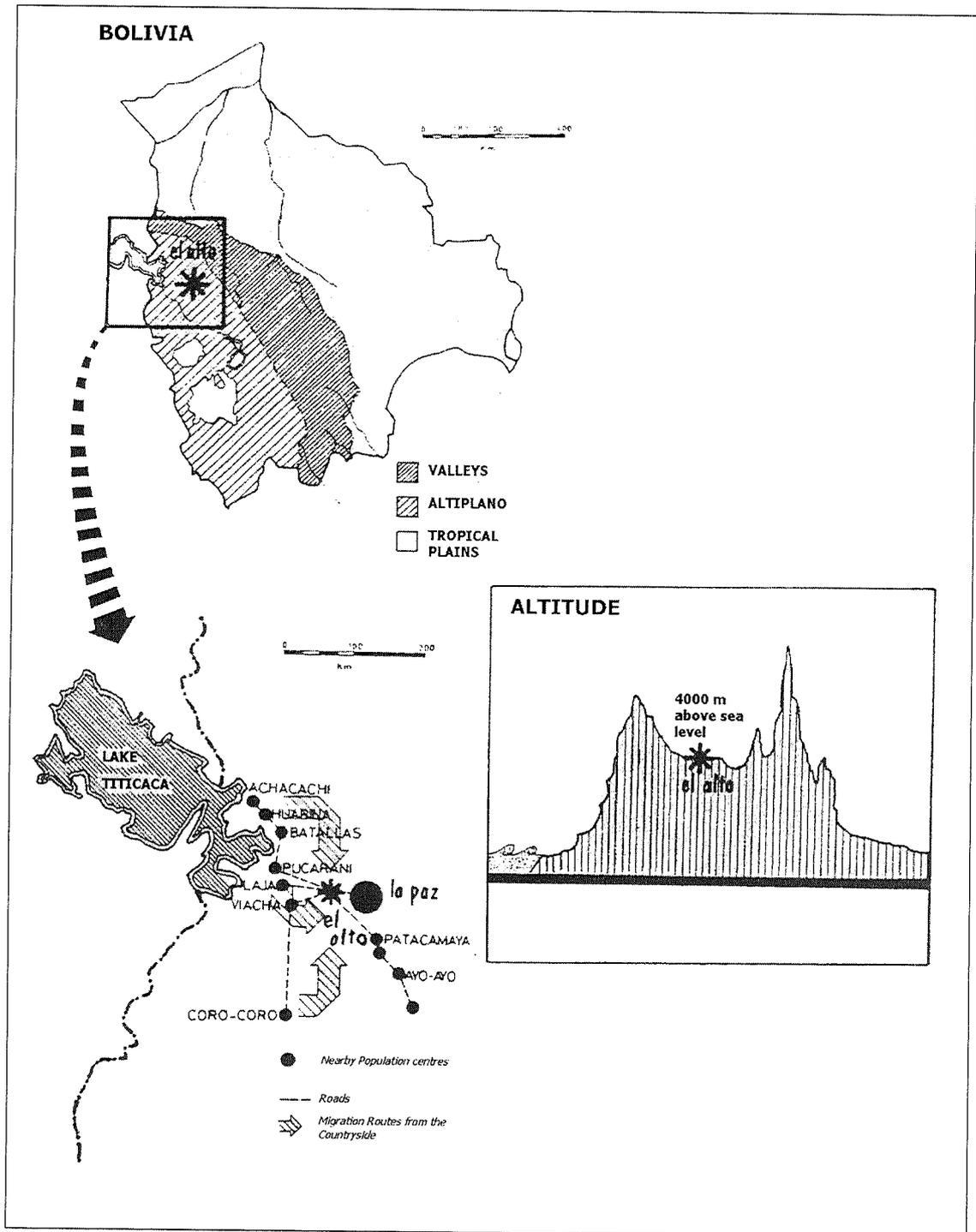
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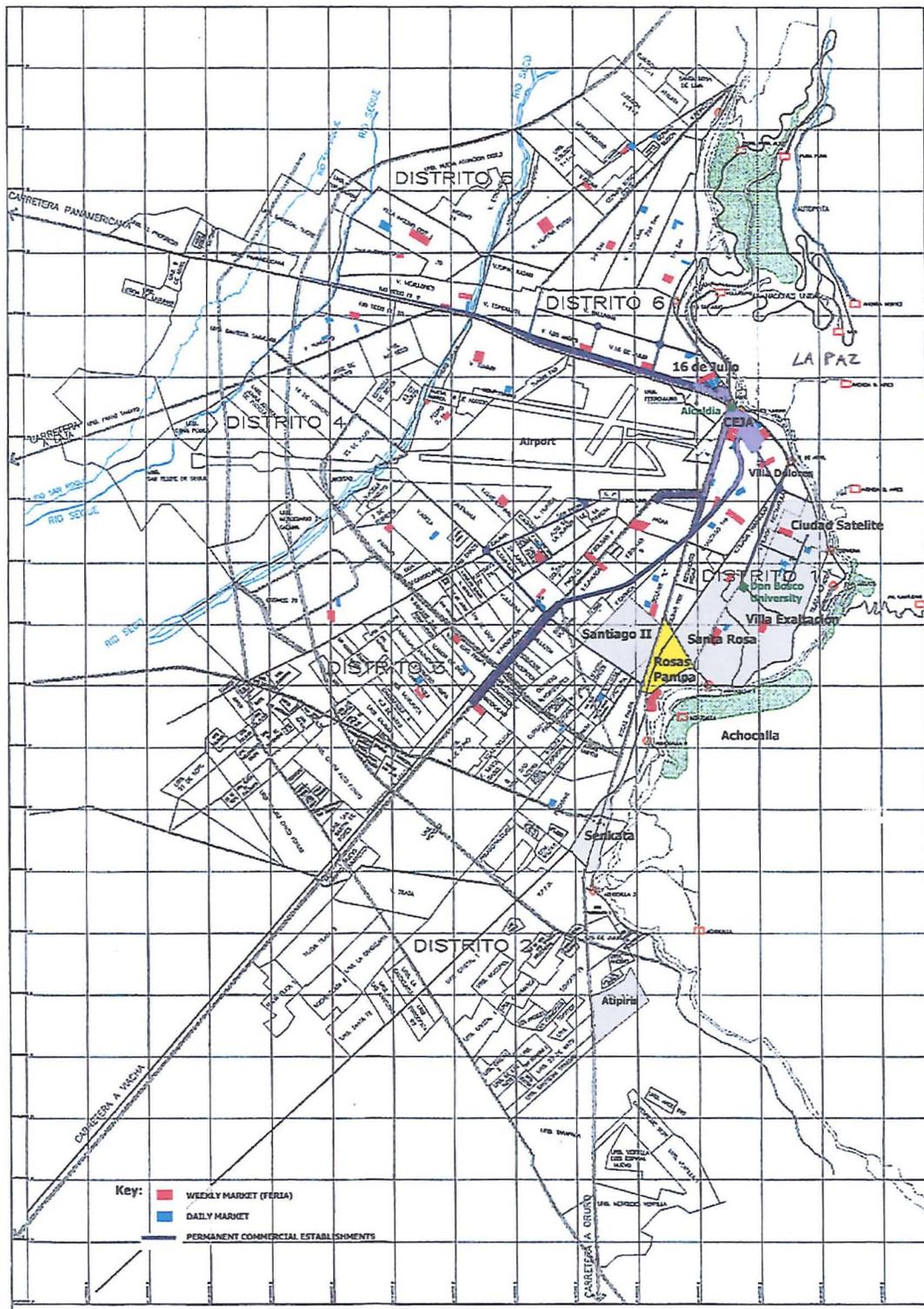
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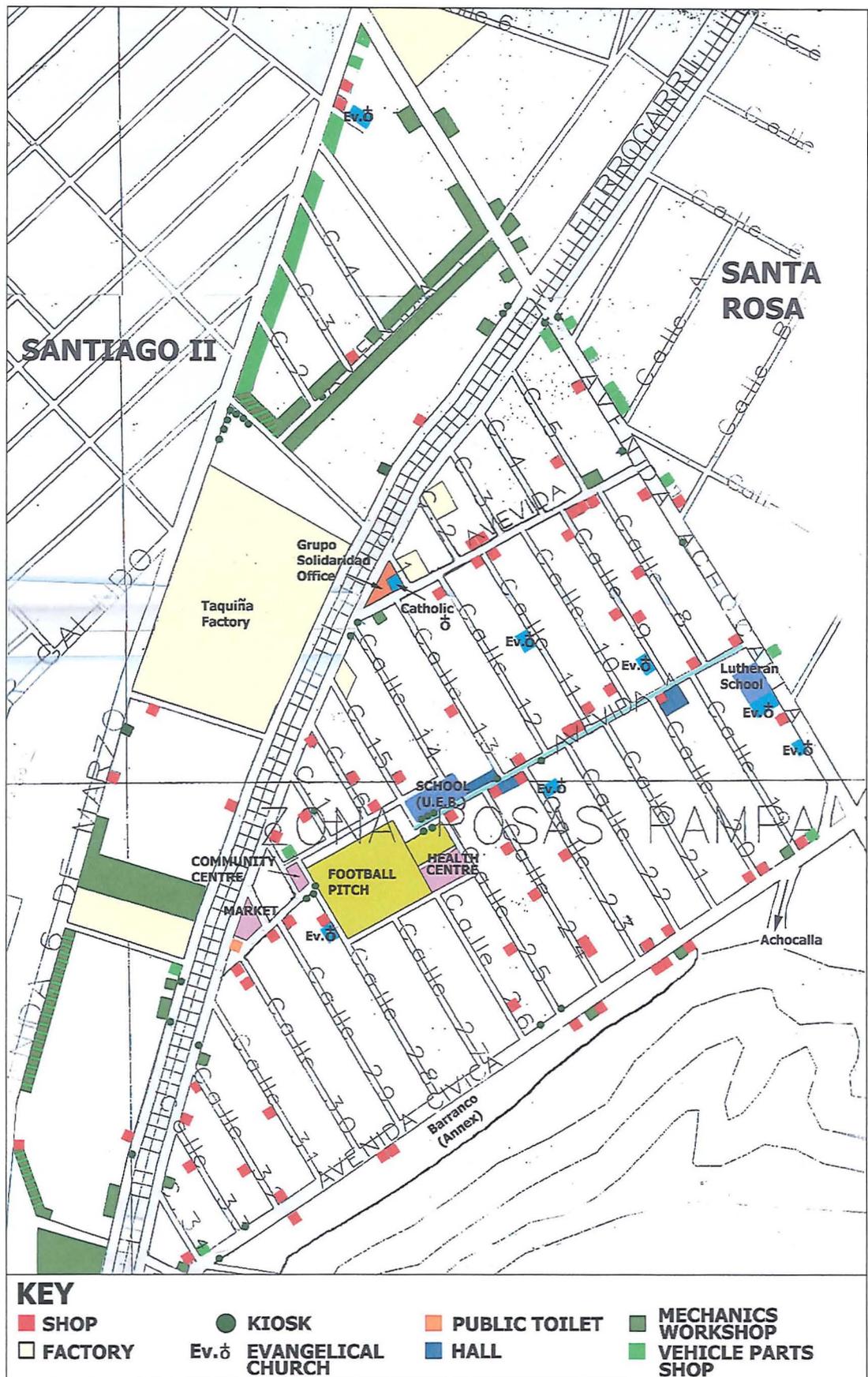
Map 1. Bolivia and El Alto

Source: Sandoval and Sostres (1989), page 19.



Map 2. El Alto

Source: Mapa del Uso de Suelo Comercial, *Plan Regulador, Ciudad de El Alto*, Comisión de Lucha contra la Pobreza de la Ciudad de El Alto, 1999; based on information from Xavier Albó, *Bolivia Plurilingüe*, CIPCA 1996



Map 3. Rosas Pampa

Sketch map using plans from the *Alcaldía* of El Alto

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Doña Gregoria, my landlady and *comadre*

Don Lucio, her husband

Carlos, their son

Virginia, their daughter

Don Víctor, Doña Gregoria's older brother

Erica, Doña Gregoria's niece

Marco, her husband

Victoria, Carlos' partner/wife

Orlando, their son

Doña Josefa, Victoria's mother

Ángelo, Victoria's little brother

Doña Emiliana, Doña Josefa's sister (Victoria's aunt)

Don Antonio, her husband

Rubén, their nephew (Victoria's cousin)

Don Roberto, the local catechist

Doña Betty, owner of a shop, and *comadre* to Doña Emiliana and Don Antonio

Doña Maria, her sister

Doña Lisa, her tenant

Don Julián, Secretary of the Junta Vecinal, and cousin of Don Antonio

Don Teodoro, President of the Junta Vecinal

Don Rolando, ex-President of the Junta Vecinal

Don Pablo, ex-President of the Junta Vecinal

Don Ronaldo, Secretary of Sports of the Junta Vecinal, and Doña Betty's brother-in-law (Doña Maria's husband)

These are the principal characters who are mentioned by name in this thesis. Most of the names here are pseudonyms. Don and Doña are polite Spanish terms which show respect for people's standing and age.

GLOSSARY

- achachila* spirits located in particular features of the local landscape, especially mountains, and the usual anthropological translation for these kinds of spirits is ancestors – *achachila* is the Aymara word for grandparent. People I knew explained the *achachilas* as the mountain peaks themselves.
- aguantar* endure, put up with
- Alcaldía* Town Hall, municipality
- Alteño/a* someone from El Alto
- altiplano* Andean highland plain
- ambulante* market trader without a fixed stall, often *ambulantes* will set out their wares on an *awayu* on the pavement
- Asociación Comunal* BancoMujer's name for the group of women receiving credit, consisting of smaller solidarity groups.
- awayu* woven textiles used as carrying cloth, usually for babies
- ayni* reciprocal and obligatory service, e.g. beer brought for weddings or other festivities. "The ayni principle is as follows: I request or receive a specific service from my kinsman or neighbour, on the understanding that on a subsequent, exactly similar occasion, I will render him/her exactly the same service" (Harris 2000: vi) (Aymara term)
- Banco Comunal* Avanzar's name for an *Asociación Comunal*
- campesino* peasant
- campo* countryside
- capacitar, capacitaciones, capacitado/a* NGO-speak referring to capacity-building; *capacitaciones* are training sessions, and *capacitado/a* means to have been trained.
- casera* relationship between consumer and vendor who always buy/sell the same things, usually staple foods, from/to each other (see pages 232-3 for detailed discussion)
- ch'alla* libation, usually to Pachamama (Aymara term)
- chachawarmi* man-and-woman, a heterosexual couple (Aymara term)
- cholo/a, cholita* ethnic term for a rural-urban migrant, most often used for women who work in commerce and wear a *pollera*, shawl and bowler

- hat. *Cholita* is the diminutive of *chola* and means young single women who dress in this way (see pages 35-40)
- chuño** freeze-dried potatoes
- comerciante** market trader
- compadrazgo, compadre, comadre** *compadrazgo* is the relationship between parents of a child and the godparent of that child; *compadre* refers to the men, *comadre* to the women.
- comparsa** dance group
- conocido/a** well-known
- Condepista** *Condepa* activist
- culto** Evangelical Protestant service
- Diana** *Entrada* held on the second day of the fiesta, early in the morning and not in full costume
- Entrada** procession of *comparsas* along the defined route of the fiesta, in full costume and usually held on the first day of the fiesta, the Friday
- hermanos/as** brothers/sisters, name for Evangelical Protestants
- hora cívica** ceremony held in schools to commemorate particular civic dates (see pages 261-3)
- interesado/a** lit. 'interested', used about people who are considered corrupt; also *personalista*
- Irpaqa** ritual whereby the future husband's family 'buys' the future wife, formalisation of a relationship and the beginning of the process of marriage (see pages 188-192) (Aymara term)
- Jefe de Calle** lit. Chief of Street, delegate from a street who attends the General Assemblies of the *Junta Vecinal* and organizes his street
- Junta Escolar** Parents' Association for a particular school
- Junta Vecinal, Junta de Vecinos** Residents' Committee; community authorities for a particular urban zone
- Katarismo** Aymara political movement, founded with the Manifesto of Tiwanaku in 1973
- Khincha** Aymara for a specific form of bad luck that might result from dancing the *Kullawada* (see pages 153-5)
- kolla** slang for someone from the *altiplano*
- Kullawada** *Entrada* dance, based upon wool spinners

<i>machista</i>	male chauvinist, sexist
<i>madrina</i>	godmother
<i>matraca</i>	rattle carried by <i>Morenada</i> dancers
<i>militante</i>	party political activist, or militant
<i>misa/mesa</i>	ritual offering to Pachamama, the <i>achachilas</i> and/or the saints (see pages 158-165 for detailed discussion)
<i>MIRista</i>	<i>MIR</i> activist
<i>Morenada</i>	<i>Entrada</i> dance, very prestigious, possibly based upon the story of African slaves (see pages 139-146)
<i>mujer de pollera</i>	woman who wears a <i>pollera</i> ; another word for a <i>chola</i>
<i>mujer de vestido</i>	woman who wears Western clothes (i.e. is not <i>de pollera</i>)
<i>obras</i>	public works
<i>Paceña</i>	someone from the department or city of La Paz
<i>padrino</i>	godfather
<i>padrino de promoción</i>	godfather of the graduating class in a secondary school.
<i>palco</i>	stage, where dignitaries sit to judge a civic parade or <i>Entrada</i>
<i>pasante</i>	organiser of a <i>comparsa</i>
<i>personalista</i>	self-interested, used about people considered corrupt; also <i>interesado</i>
<i>pluri-multi</i>	Article I of the 1994 Bolivian Constitution declares that Bolivia is “free, independent, sovereign, <i>multiethnic and pluricultural</i> ” (emphasis added). This is often glossed as the ‘ <i>pluri-multi</i> ’ because of the frequent repetition of that formula in government policy
<i>pollera</i>	gathered skirt worn over several petticoats by <i>cholitas</i>
<i>preste</i>	main organiser of a zonal or <i>pueblo</i> fiesta
<i>pueblo</i>	birth village, or, for second-generation migrants, birth village of parents; <i>pueblo</i> can also mean people, or nation (see pages 63-4)
<i>toma de nombre</i>	ceremony where the graduating class of a school takes the name of its godfather, and the godfather is introduced to his new godchildren and <i>compadres</i>
<i>trago</i>	drink made with burnt alcohol and fruit squash, served in small, shot-sized glasses
<i>vecino/a</i>	resident, inhabitant, neighbour, citizen living in an urban zone; term deriving from medieval Spain, where to be a <i>vecino</i> of a town meant to be a citizen of that town (see pages 61-5)

- voceador* young boy (sometimes a girl, but not often), who rides along in a minibus or bus, shouts out the route and collects fares from the passengers
- yatiri* ritual specialist; Aymara word meaning 'someone who knows'.
- Zona Sur* the wealthy zones in the south of the city of La Paz

ABBREVIATIONS: POLITICAL PARTIES

- ADN** *Acción Democrática Nacionalista*, Nationalist Democratic Actino; right-wing political party of General Hugo Banzer, *de facto* President in 1971-78 and democratically elected President 1997-2001, when he retired in favour of his Vice-President, Jorege 'Tuto' Quiroga. Banzer died from cancer in 2002.
- Condepa** *Conciencia de Patria*, Conscience of the Fatherland: populist political party, founded by Carlos Palenque, who died in 1997 (see pages 93-5)
- MAS** *Movimiento Al Socialismo*, Movement Towards Socialism; political party led by Evo Morales, the leader of the coca-growers
- MBL** *Movimiento Bolivia Libre*, Movement for a Free Bolivia; small political party
- MIR** *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria*, Movement of the Revolutionary Left; political party established in opposition to the military dictatorships of the 1970s, but no longer particularly left-wing. One of the three well-established oligarchic parties, with the *ADN* and the *MNR*.
- MNR** *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionaria*, Nationalist Revolutionary Movement; well-established political party and leaders of the popular revolution of 1952, but since the 1980s in favour of neo-liberal economic policies and decentralisation. Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada ('Goni'), the present leader, was President of Bolivia in 1993-7, and was voted President again in mid-2002.
- MSM** *Movimiento Sin Miedo*, Fearless Movement; small political party founded in 1999 by Juan Del Granado, a human rights lawyer. The MSM powerbase is in La Paz, and its discourse is anti-corruption and in favour of participatory democracy
- UCS** *Unidad Cívica Solidaridad*, [Unit of Civic Solidarity]; populist political party, founded by Max Fernandez in 1989. Max died in 1996, and his son Jhonny (*sic.*) now runs the party

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis addresses the dialectic between collective and individual senses of self and political agency, and the implications of that dialectic for how residents of Rosas Pampa, in the city of El Alto, Bolivia, experience their citizenship. It began with a recognition that the last fifteen years or so have seen an explosion in discussions of citizenship, in both academic and governmental realms. Those discussions have been overwhelmingly theoretical, without basis in systematic empirical research.¹ Nonetheless, they have had considerable practical ramifications. Citizenship is not simply an abstract question appropriate only for political and legal theory, but an arena for multiple and contested governmental projects which attempt to alter the ways in which people participate in politics and perceive themselves politically. These 'citizenship projects' are the subject of the second part of this thesis. The first part analyses the conceptions of self and political agency which these projects are attempting to change.

On the whole, anthropologists have not explicitly addressed the issue of citizenship, with the notable exception of some work on cosmopolitan citizenship.² However, an ethnographic approach provides a productive means of investigating citizenship empirically. Bolivia is a particularly good field site because governments of the past two decades have been forced to grapple with the issue of citizenship by pressures from above and below. From above, institutions such as the IMF pushed for neoliberal reforms which alter the terms of the individual-state relationship by reducing the state's role in economic development and social provisioning. From below, indigenous movements questioned the ways in which the normative version of Bolivian citizenship excluded them. They demanded not only inclusion but also the ability to redefine the political system so that it recognised indigenous group rights. The rural-urban migrants living in the city of El Alto lie between these two poles of citizenship, since they are neither fully assimilated (*mestizo*) nor fully excluded. Their citizenship is dynamic and in flux.

¹ Although this is changing. See Luykx (1999), and edited volumes by Yuval-Davis & Werbner (1999) and Arnot & Dillabough (2000).

² See Hannerz (1990) and Ong (1999). Renato Rosaldo (1994) has also written a short article discussing cultural citizenship. I discuss anthropology of the state below.

Over the 12 months of my fieldwork in Rosas Pampa, a neighbourhood of El Alto, I realised that it would be impossible to talk about people's citizenship without recognising the importance of their emplacement in Rosas Pampa itself, since it is that which mediates their citizenship of either El Alto or Bolivia. In Bolivian politics (as elsewhere), there is a tension between what the Bolivian political scientist Carlos Toranzo Roca (1993) has called the "individual I" ("yo individuo"), and the "collective or solidarity-based I" ("yo colectivo" or "yo solidario"), a tension which has a long historical tradition, as I discuss below. Toranzo Roca distinguishes between a logic of citizenship (for the "individual I") and a "collective-participative logic" ("lógica colectivo-participativa"). However, I would argue that this is a mis-reading of citizenship. *Both* logics are aspects of citizenship, since they both describe how people participate in government and politics. The individual mode most clearly maps to liberal citizenship, essentially a legal status consisting of various rights and responsibilities; whereas the collective version maps to the strong sense of citizenship found in contemporary social movements' demands for differentiated and active citizenship, and based in part upon the civic republican tradition. This individual-collective tension has been central to citizenship in history and political theory; although neither one nor the other is entirely adequate to explain the reality of citizenship. My thesis aims not to outline a competition between the two, but to describe how they interact. I use anthropological methods and theories to disentangle the ways in which the individual-collective tension operates in people's own perceptions of their political agency.

The first two sections of this chapter outline the context in which this thesis was researched. I make the case for Rosas Pampa and El Alto as a good field site for an investigation of citizenship, and discuss some of the historical context of citizenship in Bolivia. The third section surveys the relevant literature in anthropology and political theory, in order to explain my theoretical approach to citizenship and the contributions that my thesis will make to both disciplines. The final sections of this chapter summarize my research methods and the structure of the thesis.

Rosas Pampa and El Alto

Rosas Pampa

Rosas Pampa is a small neighbourhood in the south of the city of El Alto, which lies on the high Andean plain (the *altiplano*) above La Paz, to its West. It has approximately 1000 households, and 5300 inhabitants, or *vecinos* (a word which means both neighbour and resident³), and is bordered on one side by the highway to Oruro and on the other by precipitous cliffs that lead down to the valley of Achocalla. A railway line, along which a few freight trains pass each day, runs parallel to the Oruro highway. The *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa called it their '*zona*', or 'zone', rather than the more usual Spanish translation of neighbourhood, which is '*barrio*'. I therefore do the same throughout the thesis, and discuss the implications of the terms *vecino* and zone in Chapter 2. As Map 3 on page 9 shows, the focal point of the zone is the football field, around which the majority of the public buildings cluster. At one end are the market, the public toilets, built in the early 1990s, and the Community Centre, the ground floor of which was completed in mid-2000. At the other end is the health centre and the local state school, the Unidad Educativa Bolivia. Slightly further out lie the private school, the Colegio Luterano, and the Catholic chapel, which has a large building that housed a play-group in 1999-2000 in its grounds.



Plate 1. The Community Centre

³ Discussed in more detail in Chapter 2

Chapter 2 outlines Rosas Pampa's history. Rosas Pampa and Achocalla used to be part of a *hacienda*, which was divided among the former serfs during the Agrarian Reform in 1953. The foundation of Rosas Pampa as urban zone is usually considered to be 1975, when the *Junta Vecinal de Villa Rosas Pampa* (Neighbourhood Council of Villa Rosas Pampa) was established, an event marked by the first fiesta in the zone. During the 1970s, the *vecinos* not only struggled to gain legal recognition for their zone, but also to protect their land against usurpation by the railway company, which wanted the land for its employees (Musch, Valdez et al. 1994).

Despite its age, the infrastructure of Rosas Pampa is not at a comparable level to other well-established zones in El Alto. This is probably due to the struggles between the *vecinos* and the railway company. In 1984, public taps for drinking water were installed, and in 1994, with support from the Dutch NGO APS⁴, domestic sewage and drinking water systems were put in. Most people have water in their home, usually a tap in their yard. In 1988 a small medical centre was built, replaced in 1993 by a new building, funded and run by APS, who also organised the materials for the new Community Centre mentioned above (Musch, Valdez et al. 1994). In the late 1980s, the *Junta Vecinal* managed to get public lighting and electricity for the zone. By 1999, though, the streets were still not paved. This was the principal difference with other comparable zones in El Alto, and the principal complaint of *vecinos* according to a survey I conducted with the youth group of the local Catholic Church, details of which can be found in Appendix I. Due to the dry weather, most of the time the streets are very dusty, although during the rainy season they can become so muddy that they are almost impassable. The houses are predominantly made of adobe bricks with corrugated iron roofs. They consist of three or four separate one-room buildings clustered on one level around a courtyard. As people have time and resources they add more rooms to their compounds, which are surrounded by high adobe walls. The combination of dusty earth streets and high adobe outer walls give a semi-rural feel to the zone. Except for the times when children are on their way to or from school, the streets are relatively quiet, with maybe a couple of women or children going to make purchases at their local shop and the odd dog menacingly protecting their owner's home. Walking down some side streets (including the one I lived on) can be an ordeal because of the presence of

⁴ Proyecto de Fortalecimiento de la Atención Primaria en Salud Distrito III - El Alto; Project for the strengthening of Primary Health Care Services in District 3 – El Alto

threatening guard dogs. Seasoned *vecinos* (including children) pelt any aggressive ones with stones as they hurry past.

The zone has its own market, and also around 80 small shops, where people purchase bread, sugar, oil, soft drinks and other sundries and chat with the shop-owner. It is these trips, once or twice a day, that constitute the daily maintenance of social networks in the zone. As soon as any procession comes through the zone, such as an election campaign meeting, or a rehearsal for a dance for the fiesta, people come out of their houses to watch. Children share information and gossip at school, which they attend either in the mornings or afternoons. In the afternoons, when they are not in school and have completed their homework and chores, small groups play on the streets that do not have dogs, or in the churchyard. Adults get together for organised meetings, at the *Junta Vecinal* or *Junta Escolar* (Parents' Association); or while watching school events such as the PE and Music fairs, or the weekend football matches. During the latter, two or three establishments open up to sell beer to the men watching the football, but otherwise there are no bars that open regularly. Some adults also meet frequently for Evangelical services (*cultos*); others belong to micro-credit groups. Every so often there is also a party held in one of the halls in the zone, which involve family members from within and outside of Rosas Pampa. Collective life in the zone is very vibrant.

The *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa are mostly first or second-generation migrants from rural areas. My informal impressions were confirmed by the survey mentioned above. This showed that 46% of all the respondents to the survey and 61% of adults (that is, over 16s) were born in the *campo* (countryside). The adults had lived in Rosas Pampa for an average of just under 10 years and 3 months. 71% could speak both Spanish and Aymara, and only 20% were monolingual Spanish-speakers. For the children (under-16s), the picture was reversed, but still 18% said they were bilingual in Spanish and Aymara. This is likely to be an underestimation, since many children I knew could understand Aymara but not speak it. This is common for El Alto (Guaygua, Riveros et al. 2000).

In common with the general profile of El Alto, described below, a high proportion of *vecinos* seemed to work in the informal economy, with 35% of the adults describing

themselves as self-employed. Only 29% of working men and 8% of working women⁵ had salaried positions; and 18% of working men and 4% of working women had temporary jobs. The most common jobs for men were as drivers, of lorries, buses, minibuses or taxis, and artisans; while women were mostly housewives or worked in commerce (selling on the streets or in their own shops). Interestingly, no one who responded to the survey said that a member of their household was a domestic servant, a category of employment that is usually considered to be extremely important for *Alteño* women (Cottle and Ruiz 1993). I also knew no one with an older or younger sister who was a maid. However, I did meet older women who had been maids when they first came to the city, and my sense is that domestic service is a crucial form of employment for recent migrants. However, once they have established themselves, women prefer other employment, since being a maid is notoriously hard work.

Rosas Pampa can be said to be a middling zone of El Alto. It is poor, but its residents are generally fairly well-established migrants, many of whom came to the city or moved up from La Paz in the 1970s, a time of expansion for El Alto in general and Rosas Pampa in particular. People's migration stories vary, from those who came individually as children because of mistreatment by their parents to those who came as a couple because their land in the countryside was not producing enough, or because the man had got a job in the city. Some moved straight into commerce, others worked for several years as domestic servants in La Paz before marrying and moving up to El Alto. Many people that I knew said that they had "become used" ("[se han] acostumbrado") to Rosas Pampa, and did not wish to move. Often, El Alto is painted as a transit city, where people live while they are waiting, or aspiring, to move elsewhere, usually the city of La Paz. Instead, the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa wanted the infrastructure of the zone to improve, and their collective attempts to achieve this are documented in Chapter 2.

El Alto

El Alto lies on the *altiplano* at 4100m above sea level. It appears to be somewhat of an afterthought to La Paz, which was founded in 1548 in a bowl-like crater formed around the river Choqueyapu. El Alto looks as though it is the result of gradual increases in settlement, which expanded up the steep *laderas* (the sides of the 'bowl' and the poorest districts of La Paz itself) and spilled over to the flat plain at the top. The views are

⁵ 'Working women' and 'working men' includes housewives, but doesn't include students.

spectacular, as one can see for miles across to the Andean mountain peaks of Huayna Potosí, Mururata, and, across La Paz to the south, Illimani. From the edges of the city, you can peek over the sides of the bowl to view almost the entirety of the precarious La Paz, which always seems to be under threat of landslides that might wipe out whole districts on the *laderas* (these sometimes happen), or a great flood that would fill in the bowl with water (a story sometimes told). Yet the city of El Alto has not become the home of wealthy Bolivians seeking less claustrophobic accommodation or the freedom of the sense of endless space encouraged by the deep blue of the *altiplano* sky stretching out for miles above, or the luminescent atmosphere. They have been put off in part by the notoriously harsh weather of El Alto, and the fact that the temperature is usually a degree colder than in the centre of La Paz, and two or three degrees colder than the wealthy districts of the southern part of the city (the ‘Zona Sur’) which are nearly a thousand metres lower in altitude. Instead, some of the poorest inhabitants of La Paz made it their home from the early 20th Century onwards.

El Alto has been directly shaped by some of the great historical events of 20th Century Bolivia. At the beginning of the century, the land belonged to about five or six large *haciendas* (Sandoval and Sostres 1989). Initially, urban settlements began at what is now known as the Ceja (see Map 2), which was at the time a crossroads and the only route out of La Paz.⁶ Some people settled to conduct commercial activities in the service of the railway company, which constructed the first line through the *altiplano* in 1904. Other important constructions were the airport and flying school, built in 1923, and the offices of LAB, the national airline, opened in 1925 (Sandoval and Sostres 1989). Some of the early inhabitants of El Alto were veterans of the Chaco War (1932-35) who were offered plots of land near the Ceja for 50 Cents.⁷ In the 1940s, a number of the *hacienda* owners there saw the commercial opportunities of urbanising their lands and selling off plots. Julio Tellez Reyes was the first to follow this route, and the first zone of El Alto, ‘Urbanización Villa Dolores’, was founded on the 14th September 1942 and named after his wife. The process of urbanizing *hacienda* lands was accelerated as a result of the Agrarian Reform of 1953. The Revolution of 1952 which gave rise to the Agrarian Reform was also the first time that many of the 11 000 inhabitants of El Alto

⁶ This is still the case. Because of the bowl-like structure of La Paz, the only ways out of the city and along the busy trade routes of the Andes are through El Alto.

⁷ Land in El Alto, especially near the Ceja, is more expensive now than land in La Paz, because it is better situated for commerce or distribution of goods.

participated in mass mobilisations as organised communities (Sandoval and Sostres 1989).

The Agrarian Reform also sparked off the first big wave of migration to La Paz and El Alto from rural areas (Albó, Greaves et al. 1981). Former serfs were free to move, and in many cases the individual parcels of land given to them in their communities were not sufficient to support them and their families. In addition, around the time of the Reform, there was severe drought and famine on the *altiplano*: friends of mine told stories of eating grass because they were so hungry. People came to the city and settled on the *laderas* of La Paz and in El Alto. The next wave of migration was linked to the construction boom of Banzer's dictatorial regime in the 1970s, fuelled by foreign debt and US aid (Dunkerley 1984). Between 1960 and 1976 the population grew from about 30 000 to 95 434 (Obermaier, Perez Garriga et al. 1999). As El Alto grew, from the 1970s onwards, increasing numbers of people, especially young second-generation migrant couples, moved up from La Paz, seeking space and affordable plots of their own. The 1980s saw the third and most recent wave of migration to El Alto from all parts of Bolivia, triggered by the neoliberal 'restructuring' of Paz Estensorro's New Economic Policy and the notorious Decree 21060 of 1985. As a result of these labour flexibilisation measures, many, in particular miners, lost their jobs and large numbers of those, known as the 'relocalised' ('relocalizados') migrated to El Alto.⁸ Between the censuses of 1976 and 1992, the population of El Alto grew at the remarkable rate of 9.23% annually, to 405 492 in 1992. Today, the population is 647 350, and the rate of growth between 1992 and 2001 was 5.1% annually.⁹

In the midst of the third wave of migration described in the previous paragraph, Bolivia became democratic, in the transition of 1982-85. In 1985 local government legislation brought in elected Mayors for the first time – previously Mayors had been appointed by the President (Calderon and Szmukler 2000). Having been a district of the city of La Paz since 1970, in 1985 El Alto was granted a separate municipal administration of its own, and three years later, it formally became a city in its own right, changing its name from El Alto de la Paz (El Alto of La Paz) to Ciudad de El Alto (City of El Alto).

⁸ The other main destination for 'relocalised' miners was the region of Chapare, where many went to grow coca, encouraged by the buoyancy of the cocaine market during the boom of the 1980s.

El Alto is sometimes known in La Paz as the 'dormitory city' ('ciudad dormitorio'), because of the large numbers of *Alteños* who work in the city of La Paz but return to El Alto to sleep. The viewpoint of the upper classes who live in La Paz tends to be that El Alto is not a city in its own right, but a (dangerous and poor) part of La Paz. Academics and journalists alike maintain this picture of El Alto. Sometimes this is for anti-racist reasons, as with Xavier Albó, who argues that El Alto must be seen as part of La Paz so that the Aymara nature of La Paz is properly recognised rather than being relegated to El Alto.¹⁰ More usually, it derives from a failure to recognise the legitimacy of *Alteño* calls on resources, and an ignorance of the city itself. Most wealthy residents of La Paz only go to El Alto on their way out of La Paz or to the airport there. People often asked me incredulously why I wanted to live there, and told me stories of how dangerous it is: one wealthy *Paceña* woman said to me that "they rape their daughters up there". My opinion is that it is important to stress the specificities of El Alto's identity for both political and academic reasons: not least because it is already characterised from above in a discriminatory way and it is important to achieve a more balanced analysis.¹¹

Constructing El Alto through statistics and experience

Paradoxically, El Alto is possibly one of the most surveyed and least known parts of Bolivia as far as the 'dominant classes' of the development fraternity are concerned, at least. Since a large survey of households was conducted in 1988 (Antezana 1993), there have been a number of statistical surveys of El Alto, usually with the aim of feeding into urban development policies and plans.¹² Most years, around the anniversary of the city on 6th March, the *Alcaldía* (municipality) publishes supplements in the newspapers of the day, detailing the challenges they face in their aims to develop the city, and their plans for future public works, *obras*. The statistics combine to map the city, making it 'legible' in a bureaucratic way, for the purposes of government and development (Scott 1998). Some recur frequently, particularly the fact that, according to the 1992 census, 72.9% of *Alteño* households live in poverty – 46.7% in moderate poverty and 25.7% in

⁹ Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (INE) <http://www.ine.gov.bo>

¹⁰ Personal communication.

¹¹ I believe El Alto as a city has a greater claim on resources than El Alto as a district of La Paz.

¹² See, for example, the *Estrategia Social Municipal El Alto*, written by the Department for Planning of the Municipal Government of El Alto (Gobierno Municipal de El Alto. Dirección de Planificación Coordinación y Control 1996), and the *Diagnostico Participativo del Distrito 6 de la Ciudad de El Alto*, (Centro de promoción de la mujer Gregoria Apaza 1997), Choque Mamani (1997), Obermaier (1999),

extreme poverty.¹³ One supplement published by the *Alcaldía* in 1997 states that “The major needs of the poor population manifest themselves in basic sanitation (78%), appropriate housing (73%), health (68%) and education (64%)” (Gobierno Municipal de El Alto 1997). Although the supplement credits these statistics to UDAPSO and INE¹⁴, it is difficult to see exactly what they refer to. This is an extreme version of a tendency common to much that is written about El Alto, which constructs the city in terms of what it lacks: basic services, education and health facilities, and so forth, and with a pervasive sense of crisis and emergency:

The city of El Alto is in more than one sense the clear expression, not only of the global crisis that still affects this country, but also it exemplifies the conjunction of problematics that characterise Bolivian society. ... El Alto is a city traversed by problems from all sides. (Antezana 1993: 9-13)

Clearly these in part derive from a political project on the part of the municipality and *Alteño* NGOs, to claim more resources for the city, which it desperately needs.¹⁵

Through the number-filled pages of these documents, El Alto emerges as a young city (50% of the population is under 20, 75% is under 40), whose inhabitants lack basic services and education, and have a very poor state of health. This picture of deprivation fits all too comfortably with the racism of hegemonic views of El Alto. For example, one trend in the literature has been to focus in on the violence inherent to the city, citing high levels of domestic violence and gang participation (Cottle and Ruiz 1993; Revollo Quiroga 1996; Perez de Castanos 1999). Of course, El Alto is all this, but it is also much more, and it is not easy to find depictions of the city that go beyond such a negative portrayal.¹⁶

Rossell (1999a; 1999b), and the *Diagnostico Municipal Consolidado* of El Alto (Comite Impulsor de la Formulaciòn del Plan de Desarrollo Municipal (PDM) de El Alto 2000)

¹³ *Alteños* are certainly income-poor. In November 1997, the average monthly income of *Alteños* was 643 Bs (about US\$107); the lowest of all of the ten major cities surveyed. Source: INE (1998)

¹⁴ Unidad de Análisis de Políticas Sociales, Unit for the Analysis of Social Policy; Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, National Statistics Institute

¹⁵ Made acute by the fact that during the 1990s the municipality of El Alto was run by Condepa, a party which was only ever in national government between 1997 and 1998. The claims by the Condepa administrations of El Alto as well as the lack of central government resources directed to the city, also derive from Condepa's status as an oppositional force at national level.

¹⁶ Books that focus on community organizations in El Alto tend to give a more positive picture of the city. See, for example, Sandoval and Sostres (1989), Sostres (1995) and Anze (1995). One notable exception to both these general trends is Guaygua, Riveros and Quisbert (2000), an investigation of young *Alteños* that uses interviews and ethnography to build a picture of young people's consumption of culture and experience of family and kinship.

The depiction of problems, violence and need sits alongside another set of statistics quoted in the same pages, those which show the high levels of Aymara migrants in the city. Estimates of the percentage of *Alteños* who were born elsewhere range from 48% (Albó 1998) to about 80% (Antezana 1993) – the variation comes from varying methods of measurement. The 1993 volume (Antezana 1993) found that, in 1988, 40% of *Alteños* over 10 came from the rural areas of the department of La Paz, 13% from other departments, rural and cities, and about 25% came from the city of La Paz. Some of these would have been born elsewhere before migrating to La Paz and then moving up to El Alto. The majority of the migrants are Aymara: in 1992, according to a survey headed by Xavier Albó, 60% of *Alteños* know Aymara; and in 66 out of 81 districts more than 50% of the inhabitants said that they knew Aymara (Albó 1998).

The third set of statistics is that associated with work and the informal economy. According to the National Statistics Institute, 49.7% of the economically active population (EAP) were 'self-employed' in November 1997, earning an average income of 629 Bs a month (just over US\$100).¹⁷ 73% of the EAP worked in establishments which employed 1-4 people. Both of these statistics show the dominance of the informal sector in El Alto, which is discussed in further detail in Chapter 7. Mauricio Antezana (1993) stresses the association of El Alto with the informal economy: he estimated that in 1988-9, 73.5% of the EAP had been linked with the informal sector, and that for every one registered establishment there were 1.5 informal, unregistered ones. Most of the work in the informal sector is small-scale commerce on the streets or in markets held either daily (as in the Ceja) or once or twice a week. About 30% of the EAP work in commerce, and in 1995, there were 150 associations of market traders, *comerciantes*, each with 200-1000 members. There were 105 regular street markets and 25 daily markets in the city (Choque Mamani 1997). Teodoro Choque Mamani estimated that the combined commercial activity of El Alto and its industrial establishments contributed US\$127.9 million to Bolivia's GDP; while La Paz contributed only US\$85.3 million.

¹⁷ The calculation of the economically active population is slightly peculiar, since officially those able to work are those over 7 years of age. INE also found a fairly large economically inactive population, of students and housewives predominantly. However, most of those I knew who called themselves 'housewives' also had some occasional economic activities, of production, commerce, or paid labour even. See Chapter 7 for more details. The estimated economically active population in November 1997 was 203 617 and those working as self-employed 101 325. Source: INE (1998).

The image of El Alto as overwhelmingly migrant and Aymara sits alongside the informality of the economy and development problems in public representations of the city, either with the implication that the problems are somehow the inhabitants' own fault, or to highlight structural issues of discrimination and internal colonialism (e.g. Cottle and Ruiz 1993). Patricia Cottle and Carmen Ruiz argue that the process of acculturation to the city is violent and damaging:

Migration incurs various costs for the migrants ... which are clearly expressed in the relation between violence and migration, since migration translates into a disarticulation from what has previously constituted the web of relationships and habits, and things taken for granted in daily life All this leads to a process of personal misidentification and interior conflicts in individuals, in whom the resulting aggression generates violence. ... All these processes create a very strong anxiety in the development of the migrant Aymara personality, produced by surviving within oppressive ideological models in addition to the conditions of material exploitation. (Cottle and Ruiz 1993: 90-91)

At times, the supposed violence of life in El Alto is attributed to the 'authoritarian' nature of Aymara culture (Cottle and Ruiz 1993; Guaygua, Riveros et al. 2000).¹⁸

Whatever the reasons adduced, the city itself is not usually painted in a very positive light. To juxtapose the titles of two important early books, El Alto has become, in the imagination of much of the development community (including concerned leftists and academics), instead of a 'promised city' ('ciudad prometida') (Sandoval and Sostres 1989), more a 'city in emergency' ('ciudad en emergencia', although this is also a pun, as *emergencia* also means emergence) (Antezana 1993).

At first I thought about doing research in El Alto because of this image. I was attracted by the opportunity to do what I saw as 'proper' anthropology, that is with 'rural' people, but without having to go into remote rural areas, and while still being near to my friends and the comforts of La Paz. I was also concerned with 'development' as a research subject, and my previous exposure to El Alto had been in the context of research with a women's NGO there. When I arrived in Rosas Pampa I was initially rather disturbed by the poverty: the streets are not paved, and seem to be full of stray dogs (I later found out that many of them are not stray, but people often keep their dogs on the streets to protect their houses). My house had a tap of cold water outside

¹⁸ Aymara culture is authoritarian, but I don't think at quite the level implied by these otherwise very good books. The article by Cottle and Ruiz was writing to a particular brief, that is a specific analysis of violent aspects of Bolivian life. The other book I cite, by Guaygua et al., examines children's relationships with their parents. I do not want to deny that violence exists in El Alto, or Andean culture more generally (e.g. see Harris 1994; Harvey 1994), but it is difficult to get a balanced picture.

in the yard, and for the first week, no toilet. The public toilets smelt revolting and were dirty, and a significant distance away. I spent my first few weeks questioning my decision and my ability to live in these conditions, which I found very hard. Because my initial terms of reference were La Paz, and at first I began to appreciate the differences between El Alto and La Paz in a negative sense, I very quickly began to feel a sort of relief, because of the relative absence of racial stratification in El Alto. As much as I love La Paz, I have never been able to get used to the fact that all wealthy households have maids, and do not always treat them well; a situation which brings the colonial hierarchies into the home in a way that I find oppressive.

In the course of my fieldwork I grew to appreciate El Alto as a city, for so many reasons: the sense of a great expanse of space, the flatness of the land, the immensity of the sky, the clarity of the atmosphere, the quality of the light, the frequent glimpses of the transcendent beauty of the mountain peaks (see next page). I also appreciated the hive of economic activity at its centre, in the markets of the Ceja and the zone of 16 de Julio. The 16 de Julio market is particularly incredible, two mornings a week when the streets heave with people shopping at the top of the world, seemingly unaware of the beauty around them. In 1993, there were around 16 000 stalls and 2000 *ambulantes* (market traders without stalls), and the turnover of the market was estimated at US\$3 million each day that it was held. Situated right on the edge of the 'bowl', you can buy anything from second hand screws to state of the art PA equipment, then sit down and look out over La Paz, with trash at your feet and the most astonishing city in the world below you. At the local level of the zone, community life is palpably strong. My survey indicated that over three quarters of Rosas Pampa's *vecinos* participated in some form of civic organisation, but people also knew each other through informal social and kinship networks. Of course, once I had made friends, my attachment to the place was consolidated by the development of my own personal networks, and my growing understanding of the wealth of cultural and political life of the inhabitants of Rosas Pampa. In this thesis, I use the former in an attempt to describe the latter, with a view to presenting a different picture of El Alto than that which emerges from statistical surveys. I do not wish to claim that it is more accurate, and I obviously consider the statistical information outlined above to be crucial to any understanding of El Alto. However, it is no more than a starting point, and I hope that the ethnography presented here gives a more rounded view.



Plate 2. View of El Alto (i): Huayna Potosí, from the outskirts of Rosas Pampa

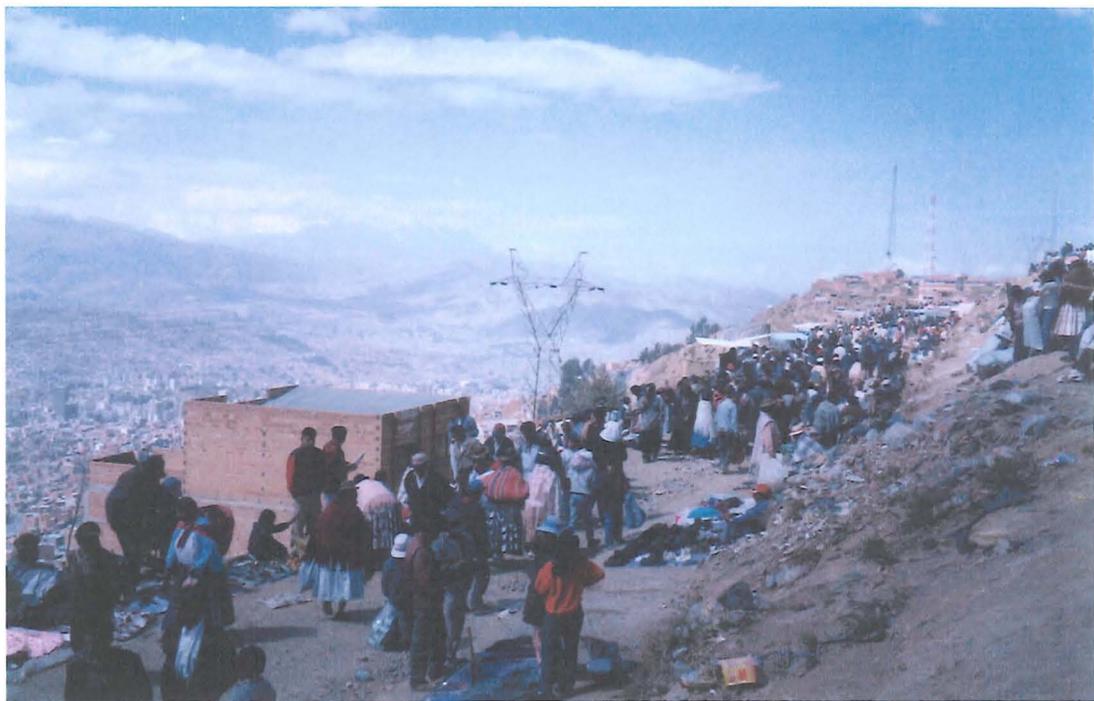


Plate 3. View of El Alto (ii): 16 de Julio Market

Cholo citizenship in historical context

History of citizenship in Bolivia

A brief discussion of the history of citizenship in Bolivia will be a useful precursor to that ethnography and to my analysis of the relevant literature from anthropology and political theory. During colonial times, the Americas were governed through the system of 'two republics': the Republic of Spaniards (*Republica de los Españoles*) and the Republic of Indians (*Republica de los Indios*). As Mark Thurner warns, this was a "half-fictional ethnopolitical duality" (1997: 44), but the distinction had power nonetheless. The Republic of Indians was maintained through what Platt (1982) called a 'pact of reciprocity', where Indians paid tribute and in return the state protected their rights to land.¹⁹ After Independence, Creole²⁰ elites attempted at various times to remove the obligation of Indians to pay tribute, on the basis that this contradicted the Liberal ideal of equal citizenship for all. In all of the newly-liberated countries of the Andes, one of the first acts of the new governments was to abolish tribute, although within a short time, they recognised that the tribute brought in too high a proportion of state income to be sacrificed, and it was restored, although re-named as a voluntary 'contribution'. It was only abolished in the mid-late 19th Century when other sources of income, from exports such as guano and tin, could replace that from Indian tribute (Klein 1982)²¹. However, in some areas in Bolivia it was still collected in the early 20th Century (Qayum 2002). Political elites influenced by European Liberal thought²² aimed to replace the tribute with a universal head tax, and assert direct state control over the Indians, in contrast to the mediated version of colonial times. The importance of individual property-holding was central to this and to their vision of citizenship. While previously the whole community had been responsible for the payment of the tribute, which was

¹⁹ The tribute demands on the Indians protected their access to land because they needed that access in order to produce goods for sale and thereby raise the funds demanded. From the 1570s, the tribute was collected in money rather than in kind, thus requiring the insertion of Indians into the cash economy (Harris 1995; Thurner 1997).

²⁰ In colonial and early Republican times, 'Creole' (*Criollo*) referred to Spaniards born in Latin America, as opposed to 'Peninsulares', who were born in Spain. Contemporary Bolivian elites who claim European ancestry can also be called Creoles.

²¹ This is a highly summarized and simplified explanation of what was, of course, a very complex process. For discussions of Indian tribute in the Andes, see Platt (1982; 1984), Harris (1995) and Thurner (1997).

²² And also civic republican thought from the French Revolution (Sobrevilla forthcoming).

administered by an ethnic lord, the new (Indian) Bolivian would be either a peon on a *hacienda* or a small yeoman farmer, with individual responsibilities direct to the state.²³

This ambivalence in the actual implementation of such citizenship projects is of some importance. Disagreements arose even between the Liberals over the kinds of transformation of property relations that were appropriate for the new independent state. In the mid 19th Century, divisions along ideological and regional lines focussed on the issue of whether the development of large *haciendas* at the expense of the Indian communities or the transformation of the Indians themselves into property-holders was preferable for Bolivia (Langer and Jackson 1997; Qayum 2002).²⁴ The 1866 agrarian legislation was designed along the lines of the former position, whereas the 1874 Ley de Exvinculación (Law of Disentailment) corresponded to the latter. Implementation of the various citizenship projects of the 19th Century was patchy not only because of divisions among the elites, but also because of structural obstacles to anti-Indian policies, such as the state need for tribute income, and direct Indian resistance (Platt 1982, 1984; Walker 1999). In court cases, responses to state officials and outright revolt, the Indians took advantage of the ambiguities of their situation of “post-colonial limbo between tributary subject and citizen taxpayer” (Thurner 1997: 53), constituting themselves as what Thurner eloquently calls “unimagined” political communities, in the “dark shadows cast by the ‘enlightened’ discursive framework of the Creole national state” (Thurner 1997: 137). Well aware of the protection of land rights afforded by the colonial institution of tribute and the separate Republic of Indians, Indians used colonial understandings to assert their rights. They often phrased this as an assertion of *republicano* status, which can be seen as a sort of subaltern citizenship.²⁵ Thurner describes this citizenship of the early independence period in Peru as follows:

²³ Although not necessarily a citizen. The 1826 constitution distinguished between citizens and Bolivians, and the former status required literacy, property-holding, and a vocation or trade (Qayum 2002).

²⁴ Which side of the debate won depended upon central state politics: the most aggressive promotion of large-scale alienation of Indian land happened during Mariano Melgarejo’s regime (1864-70), and had a lot to do with Melgarejo’s need for income (Qayum 2002). There was also a regional differentiation, where the northern areas around La Paz were particularly subject to expropriation (through voluntary sales as well as more dubious and coercive measures), and the expansion of the *hacienda* at the expense of the Indian communities (Langer and Jackson 1997).

²⁵ Mark Thurner worked in the Huaylas-Ancash region of Peru, using court cases in particular to gain a picture of the ‘unimagined’ communities that were the counterpart to the political communities imagined by Creole elites in the 19th Century. Platt (1982) documents a similar process in the Northern Potosí region of Bolivia, where Indian resistance to agrarian reforms in both the 19th and 20th Centuries drew on colonial understandings of the two republics. Since the 1980s, there has developed a considerable body of work on the ways in which Indians used elite political discourses of liberalism and republicanism to protect their political and economic rights, and to contribute to the building of the post-colonial nation-

To be a good *republicano* had a local meaning that included the fulfilment of civic, religious, and economic obligations to the local ethnic polity or community. . . . The local republic was articulated with the national Republic via the 'contribution' to the national treasury of the *patria* and via *la republica* public works labor. Thus, to be a good republican of the village community meant to take on with dignity all the obligations of local civic and religious service without remuneration (indeed, usually at a loss). To be a good republican in the broader, national sense of taxpaying republican indigene, meant to pay the contribution to the state treasury (and not to the ethnic chief, as in the colonial period). In return for this state contribution, Indians expected protection of their precarious access to a usufruct right inherited from their colonial forebears. (Turner 1997: 34)

Some elements of this locally-based subaltern vision of citizenship persist today in Rosas Pampa, as I show in Chapters 2 and 4 of this thesis.

The late 19th and early 20th Centuries saw the most concerted Liberal attack on Indian communal lands in Bolivia, and consequently strong resistance on the part of the Indians, which erupted into wholesale revolt in 1899 (Klein 1982; Platt 1982, 1984; Langer and Jackson 1997). The expansion of the *haciendas* was most pronounced in the northern *altiplano*, around La Paz and Lake Titicaca, where the dispossession and repression of the Indians was justified through Social Darwinist philosophies popular in the city of La Paz at the time (Demelas 1992). However, as Seemin Qayum (2002) persuasively argues, the central paradox of Bolivian liberalism remained for the elites: their discourse of homogenisation and equality clashed with the structures of internal colonialism that required differentiation between Creole and Indian. Whereas in Mexico this problem was eventually semi-resolved at a discursive level through the promotion of a *mestizo* race of Mexicans, in Bolivia as in the other Andean republics, the Creole imaginings of the nation could only cope with a bifurcated racial consciousness of non-Indian and Indian (Demelas 1992; Mallon 1995). During the period of Liberal hegemony between the 1880s and 1920s, the version of citizenship presented to the Indians by the political elites was essentially exclusion from the imagined nation of Bolivia, even though the Indians themselves consistently resisted that exclusion.

Later, the National Revolution of 1952 had the potential from the Indian point of view to be a truly popular revolution, which could restore the colonial situation of respect for the pact of reciprocity (Platt 1982). In fact, the Agrarian Reform legislation of 1953

states in Latin America. See Joseph (1994), Mallon (1995), Turner (1997), Chambers (1999) and Walker (1999).

conformed more to the vision of Indians as individual property-holding citizens expressed in the 1874 legislation. However, the associated legislation that extended the vote and primary education to all shows the 1952 revolution to be Liberal in a slightly different sense, in that its 'citizenship option' for the Indians was that of assimilation. This accorded with an attempted emphasis on *mestizaje* (*mestizo*-ness) in the Mexican mould. Both exclusion and assimilation are consistent with the Liberal focus on homogeneity among the citizenry.

However by the mid-1990s, Bolivia was at the forefront of Latin American moves to design a new relationship between individuals, communities and the state that took into account a more differentiated citizenship. Constitutional and legislative reforms heralded a citizenship project that improved upon the liberal Hobson's choice of assimilation or exclusion. The Bolivians seemed to have finally found a resolution of an old debate in political theory, which is usually glossed as the equality-difference debate.²⁶ The basic problem is one of how to achieve fairness or equality. Liberals argue that this is best achieved through treating all people as if they were the same (a universal category of citizenship), and that group differentiated minority rights go against that equal treatment. Their critics argue that treating everyone the same ends up favouring dominant groups, and is therefore unjust (Kymlicka 1995; Little 2002).

The flagships of these reforms were the Popular Participation legislation (Ley de Participación Popular, LPP) and the education reforms of 1994. The former aims to coordinate municipal government and civil society in order to administer local resources, reducing the role of central government to that of regulator. Prior to 1994, around 10% of national revenue had gone to local governments, principally in the urban centres of La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. Along with the *campo*, El Alto had not received significant resources. The LPP increased the amount of national revenue directed to local government to 20%, and instituted a framework whereby it would be distributed through municipalities and according to population, as measured in the 1992 census. Nearly 200 new municipalities were created, especially in rural areas, in order to administer the money (Gray Molina 2002), and the El Alto *Alcaldía* began to receive much more money than it had previously administered. The LPP also devolved

²⁶ For discussions, see Phillips (1993), Kymlicka (1995), Scott (1996) and Lister (1997)

responsibility for health and education infrastructure to the municipalities.²⁷ The ‘popular participation’ element comes in the planning and supervisory mechanisms. In urban areas, delegates from *Juntas Vecinales* form Supervisory Committees to supervise the municipal budgeting; and the planning processes for the annual municipal plans are meant to be highly participatory.²⁸ One of the most revolutionary aspects of the LPP, apart from the stress on participation, was the fact that it recognised indigenous authorities, who were able to register their community as a ‘Territorial Base Organisation’ (‘Organizacion Territorial de Base’, OTB) and send delegates to the local Supervisory Committee. For the first time in Latin America, indigenous communities were incorporated as groups into the structures for administering local development. The educational reform responded to similar imperatives by encouraging ‘intercultural education’ which recognises the ‘multi-ethnic and pluricultural’ nature of the Bolivian nation.²⁹

Such reforms provoked considerable optimism in the mid-1990s. However, my thesis is more pessimistic, largely because the research was conducted well into General Banzer’s presidential term that began in 1997, when the political will for differentiated citizenship and the ‘*pluri-multi*’, was no longer in evidence. At the turn of this century, the main aim of the Bolivian administration was to eradicate coca cultivation, at the behest of the American Embassy. This in turn had serious effects on the economy, which was also suffering from the current global recession. The policy initiatives driven by Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada’s forward-thinking and planning government of 1993-7 were no longer in evidence. Indeed, the administration seemingly had no plans of government at all, and lurched from one political crisis to another. Meanwhile, criticisms of the reforms of the mid-1990s were growing. Problems included the often disempowering implementation of popular participation, the increased opportunities

²⁷ Unfortunately, the infrastructure in El Alto is desperately in need of investment which the municipality simply cannot afford even with the increased revenue, without help from national government or international development agencies.

²⁸ Supervisory committees (Comites de Vigilancia) were set up for ordinary people to have some input into what things would be included in the yearly development plans, and also to supervise the finances of the *Alcaldía*. See Booth (1997), Albó and CIPCA (1999), McNeish (2001) and Gray-Molina (2001) for discussions of how this law is operating in practice in rural areas of Bolivia.

²⁹ Article I of the 1994 Bolivian Constitution declares that Bolivia is “free, independent, sovereign, *multiethnic and pluricultural*” (emphasis added). This is often glossed as the ‘*pluri-multi*’ because of the frequent repetition of that formula. The educational reform also consists of measures introducing a form of performance-related pay for teachers, new training requirements for them and new pedagogical methods focused more on getting the schoolchildren to be active learners. It also aims to include the *Juntas Escolares* more in school administration.

for corruption as a result of more money in local administration and the proliferation of technical experts and party politicians in rural areas, all of whom drew on local resources and reduced local control of politics (McNeish 2001). The education reform has been criticised for producing materials in a form of Aymara which bears little relation to dialects that are actually spoken.³⁰ Furthermore, as yet, 'intercultural education' is in practice limited to bilingual education in the *campo* rather than something meaningful in the city, as I discuss in Chapter 6. Differentiated citizenship has proved very hard to achieve in practice.³¹

Cholo *citizenship*

El Alto is a particularly interesting place to study citizenship in Bolivia, because its very existence demonstrates the failure of the dominant Liberal projects of citizenship I described above. Neither fully assimilated nor fully excluded, *Alteños* are a constant presence for the political elites of La Paz, looking down threateningly and reminding them of the fragility of their privilege on a daily basis. Hence much of the racism directed towards El Alto from the Zona Sur. A sense of the fluidity and ambiguity of that racism can be gained through a discussion of the term often applied to *Alteños*, that is *cholo*. At its most basic, *cholo* means an Indian who has come to live in the city and is somewhere between being an Indian and being a *mestizo*. It is both a racial and a social category, signified by indigenous physical features plus particular clothes and economic activities, most especially commerce.³² It clearly partakes of the racism associated with the term 'Indian'. It is usually very pejorative, possibly deriving etymologically from a word meaning 'mongrel', or from a term used of the lower classes in Early Modern Madrid (Peredo Beltrán 1992). I acknowledge that it is somewhat risky to use *cholo* as an analytical category in a social science thesis, but would argue that it works well as a descriptor and, more importantly, that it does not hide from the racism that *Alteños* face, in fact it highlights that racism very starkly. In addition, it foregrounds gender and the interplay between race, ethnicity, class and

³⁰ Forcing an oral language into written text led to the civil servants inventing words, and the Educational Ministry attempted to produce Aymara texts for the whole of the *altiplano*, which use a rather bastardised urban Aymara and do not take into account the highly regionalised nature of the language, making the materials incomprehensible (Arnold and de Dios Yapita 2000).

³¹ Sanchez de Lozada's recent victory in the Presidential elections may see a renewal in political will in favour of the *pluri-multi*.

³² Described below. The category 'Indian' is also associated with specific economic activities (i.e. agriculture) and relations to capitalist markets (Harris 1995).

gender, in very specific ways, which I discuss below.³³ Xavier Albó (1998) argues that it would be more accurate to describe the people of El Alto as urban Aymara, a term I also use throughout the thesis. Yet ‘urban Aymara’ perhaps does not fully recognise the bilingual nature of El Alto, and has some connotations of the persistence of rurality in the urban sphere. The notion of *cholo* describes a more fluid and processual mixing of rural and urban, the ethnogenesis of a hybrid cultural category. Often, the *cholo* is defined as an Indian on the way to becoming *mestizo*, but as Abercrombie points out,

Consigning such complex and long-lived cultural forms to the status of an ephemeral subjective acculturation that rural “Indians” pass through on their way to becoming urban “nationals” misses the larger point, since even when it is “true” in an individual case, the cultural order thereby taken up has a life and history of its own. (Abercrombie 1991: 98).

Usually, it is not even “true” in an individual case, and the actual potential for upward mobility is a source of some debate.³⁴ However, the possibility for upward mobility is certainly an important aspect of being a *cholo*, in how people see themselves as well as in the transitional nature of the category in academic representations.³⁵

I describe my own impressions in some detail, because inevitably, *cholo* is a subjective term. Like many ethnic terms, it alters its meaning according to the speaker and context. Definitions vary in different parts of the Andes (Weismantel 2001). People rarely explicitly self-define as *cholos*, except for some market women, for whom being a *chola*, or a ‘gran chola Paceña’³⁶ is an acknowledgement of their success in commerce. People also often describe single, young, pretty women as ‘*cholitas*’, the diminutive of *chola*³⁷. The most common signifier of being a *chola* or *cholita* is dress, that is layered gathered skirts, called a *pollera*, a shawl, specific shoes, and a bowler hat.³⁸ For special occasions, women wear a shawl of vicuña wool, which is extremely expensive, and their best hats, which are an Italian make called Borsalino; they also wear large gold brooches and earrings. Women do call themselves ‘*mujeres de pollera*’ (lit. women of the *pollera*), in opposition to ‘*mujeres de vestido*’, that is women in Western clothes, which are much

³³ For an excellent discussion of the cultural category of *chola* in Andean anthropology and literature, see Weismantel (2001), particularly chapter 3.

³⁴ Bourricaud argues that *cholo* refers to “rising mestizos” and “represents the element of mobility in a system which neither encourages nor stresses mobility” (1975: 351, 357). Linda Seligman (1989; 1993) is rather more skeptical about the real prospects for mobility.

³⁵ The desire to get ahead (‘superarse’) is very important for rural-urban migrants (*cholos*) in La Paz and El Alto. See Lazar (2002).

³⁶ The adjective *Paceño/Paceña* means someone from the city or department of La Paz.

³⁷ In work that I researched in 1997, I did not come across this latter definition of *cholita* (Lazar 2002).

cheaper than the *pollera*, shawl, etc.³⁹ Mary Wiesmantel (2001) notes the ways in which women make ‘indexical statements’ about themselves through their clothes, and even what they buy and eat, even if they do not explicitly refer to themselves as *cholas*. This is of methodological importance for anthropologists, highlighting the contrast between an emphasis on the research subjects’ explicit self-categorisings through speech, and a more traditional approach privileging the omniscient eye of the anthropologist, who is able to record objective categories of ethnicity. Weismantel argues that it is important to achieve a balance between the two.⁴⁰ In any case, many women do recognise themselves as *cholas* if asked specifically, since this is the known term for a woman who dresses in this way, even though it is more polite to say ‘*mujer de pollera*’. In an earlier research project, when I asked women about the words *chola* or its diminutive, *cholita*, they said that they thought *cholita* was often a term of endearment. Some maintained that the *chola* is the true Bolivian (Lazar 2002). However, if said by a (whiter) person of higher class status, and in a certain tone, it can be a very pejorative term. Men do not usually recognise themselves as *cholos*, and it would be highly impolite to ask them about this.⁴¹

Some of the problems of using *cholo* as analytical category can be seen in much of the academic literature about *cholos*, where it is unclear how, or whether, authors draw a line

³⁸ Indian phenotypical features are also important, especially dark hair, which is usually worn long, straight and in two plaits.

³⁹ For discussions of *chola* dress, see Buechler (1996), Salazar de la Torre (1999) and Weismantel (2001). To complicate matters further, there are also categories of ‘*chota*’ and ‘*virlocha*’, which refer to women of indigenous appearance but who are *de vestido*, and have overtones of sluttishness. These are actually more pejorative than *chola*. See Rivera Cusicanqui (1996)

⁴⁰ In a discussion of Marisol de la Cadena’s work (1996), where de la Cadena refuses to call the market women of Cuzco *cholas* because they consider themselves to be *mestizas*, Weismantel points out that the issue is not only about how women explicitly recognize themselves, but that how they present themselves matters too:

Despite its power to insult, the use of the word *chola* to describe women who work as produce vendors, *chiceras*, butchers and cooks is not an imposition by foreign anthropologists, nor the fantasy of literary writers: all Cuzco knows them as *cholas*. . . . If foreign scientists and native romantics enjoyed looking at *cholas* too much, and for the wrong reasons, we do not rectify their errors by refusing to look at all. The market women’s anomalous location on the social map might seem to be a projection on the parts of elites and outsiders, but it is also a product of what the women themselves do and say. (Weismantel 2001: 102-3)

⁴¹ Linda Seligman points out that:

In a survey of literature on *cholas*, Burkett (1975) consistently found that a ‘*chola*’ was described in the literature as, ‘A strong, willful woman, either Indian or *mestiza*, aggressive economically and socially. She stands in sharp contrast to her ‘*cholo*’ brother who is seen as a drunk, bumbling, meek, and not very bright.’ . . . Burkett found . . . that the same picture of the *chola* had already been drawn in the early colonial period. (Seligman 1989: fn.8, p.704).

The reference is to a PhD dissertation from the University of Pittsburgh, which I have been unable to get hold of. However, it is a particularly good description of the stereotypes.

between *mestizo* and *cholo*. Florencia Mallon makes a useful point when she argues that the modernisation perspective of 1960s and 70s sociology and anthropology led academics to argue that Indians who moved to the cities would become incorporated into the modern world, through cultural transformation: “In the cases where this transformation was considered complete, it was called *mestizaje*; where it remained incomplete, it was termed ‘cholification’” (Mallon 1992: 38). *Cholos* are often viewed as *mestizos* who are more on the Indian side of the continuum. This leads to some slippage between the two categories, particularly in texts that deal with the history of those in between Spanish and Indian. Some authors either talk of *mestizos* and *cholos* as the same, or of *cholos* as a sub-section of *mestizos* (Bourricaud 1975; Bouysse-Cassagne and Saignes 1992; Harris 1995; Bouysse-Cassagne 1996), while others privilege the *cholos* in their analysis (Seligman 1989; Peredo Beltrán 1992; Seligman 1993; Weismantel 2001).⁴² It becomes difficult to disentangle colonial concerns for the purity of both Spanish and Indian blood from concerns about ‘Creole Indians’ (‘indios criollos’), or ‘successful Indians’ (‘indios con éxito’), that is the Indians that moved to the cities and worked in urban trades such as mining or commerce (Abercrombie 1991). Thus, across the sum of the relevant academic works, one finds that the offspring of the marriages between Spanish conquistadors and Inca nobles and contemporary market women in Peru all become part of one category of *mestizo*, which can be confusing. Therese Bouysse-Cassagne, for example, uses the fact that *chola* (*sic.*) dress does not have the identifying marks usual on an Indian over-skirt to make a point about all *mestizos* being outside identifiable communities (1996).⁴³

Perhaps that confusion is an important part of defining the *cholo*. Certainly, it is important to recognise that *cholo* is one of the interstitial categories, outside identifiable communities, that historically threatened the distinction between Indian and Spaniard,

⁴² Although I use literature about the whole Andean region to discuss ethnic terms, there are differences. For example, the terms *mestizo*, indigenous, and Indian operate slightly differently in Bolivia and Peru. In Bolivia, *indígena* is not as negative a term as it is in Peru. In Peru, as Marisol de la Cadena (2000) demonstrates, there was no *mestizaje* project in Peru comparable to Mexico or in post-1952 Bolivia. Increasingly indigenous people in Peru have adopted the term *mestizo* for themselves, in order to distance themselves from the negative stereotyping of *indígena* (indigenous), and the reifications of the (very strong) *indigenista* movement.

⁴³ Thomas Abercrombie’s excellent work on the relationship between Indian and non-Indian also illustrates the problems of confusion. On the one hand, he assimilates *cholos*, or ‘creole Indians’ with the Indian, when he points out that the urban Indians were, for the Spanish and *mestizos*, a “particularly pernicious form of debased Indianhood” (1991: 114). On the other, the city people who dance at Carnival time in Oruro, and other ‘copycat’ festivals in other cities of Bolivia, are, for Abercrombie,

and thus the colonial order of the two republics (Abercrombie 1991; Bouysse-Cassagne 1996). The Spanish colonial imagination seems to have been unable to cope with miscegenation, the 'third republic' of *cholos*, *mestizos*, *forasteros* and *yanacunas*⁴⁴ alternately denigrated and repressed (Peredo Beltrán 1992). That bipolar vision of race persisted throughout Independence, to early 20th Century *indigenistas* and beyond: cholification is a danger to the need for a pure Indian as well as a pure non-Indian.⁴⁵ Nowadays, *cholos* are often looked down on by both Indians and *mestizos*/whites in Bolivia, because of their inability to be one or the other. That in-betweenness is what is most threatening about the *cholos* for Andean whites (Creoles) today, in cultural terms, but also economically and politically.

Economically, *cholos* are indelibly associated with the urban service sector and the informal economy: transport, commerce, and, in earlier times, mining. The *chola* is stereotypically a market woman, the intermediary between the rural (Indian) producers and urban (*mestiza*, white) consumers. The *cholo* often transports the products to the markets. These stereotypical activities of *cholos* are a good description of what people in Rosas Pampa do for a living. They also highlight the dependence of the urban *mestizos* and whites on the *cholos*. For the *cholo* intermediaries are able to withhold the produce (Seligman 1993), and their familiarity with the peasants means that they are often 'on their side', as I saw during the peasant blockades of the roads entering La Paz in April 2000. Agricultural produce shot up in price, the effects of a combination of reduced supply and speculation, and daily items on the TV news expressed the nervousness of the urban middle and upper classes about increased prices and the spectre of food shortages. The high prices also affected those who lived in Rosas Pampa, but friends of mine had no problems going through the blockades and bringing produce back for their own consumption. My landlady said

"As far as I'm concerned, it's fine. That way, perhaps the government will think a little bit. We're fine here – we have potato, *chuño*,⁴⁶ meat. It's the people who live in Obrajes and Calacoto [i.e. the rich areas of La Paz] who will suffer, because they buy their food each week, don't they?"

dancing the 'Indian within', and by implication are *mestizos*. The problem is that *cholos* also dance in city fiestas, as I describe in Chapter 4, and the place of the *cholo* is unclear in Abercrombie's discussion.

⁴⁴ *Forasteros* were Indians without access to community land, *yanacunas* were servants to the Spanish. *Yanacuna* is an Inca term. See Harris (1995).

⁴⁵ Bourricaud (1975) discusses the problems 20th Century *indigenistas* had with cholification.

⁴⁶ Freeze-dried potatoes.

(“Para mí está bien. Así quizás el gobierno va a reflexionar un poco. Estamos bien – tenemos papita, chuñito, carne. Los que viven en Obrajes y Calacoto, ellos van a sufrir, porque compran semanalmente, ¿no ve?”)

Politically, the *cholos* are also a threat, because of their numbers and increasing political consciousness. In Peru, the *cholos* famously voted in President Fujimori in 1990, and there is some evidence to suggest that the children of *cholos* were the principal source of activists for the terrorist group Sendero Luminoso (Seligman 1989; Degregori 1991; Seligman 1993). In Bolivia around the same time (that is the late 1980s and early 1990s), the rising importance of the *cholos* as constituency was underlined by the remarkable success of the political party Condepa.⁴⁷

Although *cholo* is at times an unpleasantly racist term, there are real, material, people living as *cholos*, and the dissonance between the two terms of the title of this thesis, ‘*cholo*’ and ‘citizens’, expresses a key problem for Bolivian citizenship. Neither Indian nor Spaniard/Creole/White/*mestizo*, the *cholos* disrupt Bolivian understandings of citizenship. They did not belong to one of the colonial republics, and they are neither fully assimilated nor excluded as in the Liberal versions of citizenship. Similarly, although the (neoliberal) differentiated citizenship projects of the mid 1990s recognised the Indian, they failed to acknowledge the *cholo*. This thesis therefore attempts to analyse how the *cholos* experience their ‘subaltern’ citizenship.

Anthropological approaches to the Andes and the state

Andean Anthropology

Anthropology of the Andes has tended to focus more on the rural areas of the *altiplano* than the few cities located there. In Bolivia there has traditionally been a division of labour between foreign anthropologists studying the *campo* and Bolivian sociologists studying the urban areas, although institutes such as ILCA and PIEB⁴⁸ have recently begun to sponsor the study of the *campo* by native anthropologists and sociologists.⁴⁹ Much of the sociological material on the urban area of La Paz and El Alto has focussed

⁴⁷ I discuss Condepa in Chapter 3. Also see Lazar (2002).

⁴⁸ Instituto de Lengua y Cultura Aymara, Institute of Aymara Language and Culture; and Programa de Investigación Estratégica en Bolivia, Program of Strategic Research in Bolivia

⁴⁹ See, for example, Quintana Torga (1998), Talavera Simoni (1999), Arnold (2000) and Fernández Osco (2000).

on migration, beginning with the seminal three-volume work Chukiyawu: La Cara Aymara de La Paz authored by Xavier Albó, Tomas Greaves and Godofredo Sandoval, and published in the early 1980s. This used interview and survey data to investigate the reasons why people decided to move from the *campo* to the city (1981), the kinds of jobs they found once there (1982) and the ways in which urban migrants maintained connections with their rural areas of origin (1983). It seems to have set a trend for survey-based sociological investigation of the condition of being a migrant, and important studies of El Alto, La Ciudad Prometida (Sandoval and Sostres 1989) and El Alto Desde El Alto Vols I y II (Antezana 1993), followed.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Bolivian sociologists became especially concerned with indigenous political movements, especially that known as *Katarismo*. This literature spanned both urban and rural areas, but focussed on the political groups themselves.⁵⁰ Xavier Albó again led the way here, publishing a very important article highlighting ‘the Return of the Indian’ to the political stage in Bolivia and Latin America more generally. He tapped into a general optimism about indigenous political activism, provoked by the wave of mobilisations around the 500th anniversary of conquest in 1992 (Wearne 1996). With Esteban Ticona and Gonzalo Rojas, Albó published Votos y Wiphalas (1995), a magisterial piece on the rise of the indigenous and peasant movements in Bolivia.⁵¹ Combining the two themes of migration and indigenous political activism, another important body of work in the late 1980s and early 1990s analysed the success of local populist political parties in the municipal elections of the time. Rafael Archondo (1991) and Joaquin Saravia and Godofredo Sandoval (1991) wrote about Condepa, whose success among rural-urban migrants (i.e. *cholos*) in La Paz and El Alto meant that for the first half of the 1990s they administered both cities, and they retained power in El Alto until 1999.⁵² Thus, the political agency of Aymara and urban Aymara has been important for Bolivian sociology for some time now, and has influenced this thesis’ choice of citizenship as a theme.

⁵⁰ Andrew Canessa has recently published an article discussing *Katarismo* (and Evangelical Protestantism) in a more ethnographic and less institutionalized sense (2000).

⁵¹ See also Ticona Alejo (2000) for discussion of Aymara activism.

⁵² It is probable that Condepa’s success was in part responsible for the electoral victory of the *Kataristas* on the national stage, when a *Katarista* leader, Victor Hugo Cárdenas became Vice-President in 1993. For some commentators, Cárdenas’ victory was one of the peaks of the ‘return of the Indian’ in Latin America (e.g. Wearne 1996). The MNR presidential candidate Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada invited Cárdenas to run for election with him with at least one eye to gaining votes at Condepa’s expense and co-opting what was for the traditional parties a newly-discovered constituency of rural-urban migrants.

Another influence has been work published by NGOs, especially those concerned with labour and gender, most notably CEDLA and the Centro de promoción de la mujer Gregoria Apaza.⁵³ The latter has been particularly important in sponsoring the publication of books that describe women's lives in El Alto, addressing themes such as female participation in local development, work and domestic violence (Ruiz 1993; Criales 1994, 1995; Sostres 1995; Loayza Castro 1998). In 1996, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui compiled a much cited volume on gender, called Ser mujer indígena, chola o birlocha en la Bolivia postcolonial de los años 90 (1990), and published by the newly-established Subsecretariat for Gender Affairs, which was staffed at the time by prominent Bolivian feminists from organisations such as Gregoria Apaza and CIDEM.⁵⁴ In the mid-1990s, women's citizenship became a central concern for the Latin American women's movement, as the regional preparations for the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women framed their demands in terms of full citizenship for women. Bolivia was no exception, and when I was interviewing female Condepa activists for my Masters dissertation and NGO activists for a project on rights-based development, I came across a number of discussions of citizenship. For me, what was interesting about the literature⁵⁵ and the descriptions of NGO activities given to me in interviews, was the stress on the importance of women's self-esteem for their political agency. The women highlighted the personal and subjective senses of being a citizen, inasmuch as people need to feel that they have, in Hannah Arendt's famous phrase, a sense of 'the right to have rights'.

This thesis aims to refine the emphasis on rights common in most citizenship theory, but retains the personal focus on the sense of self that was suggested to me by Bolivian feminists. It concurs with the Bolivian literature on urban areas in its emphasis on questions of migration and the political agency of indigenous peoples and women. However, while all of the studies cited above have what one might call an anthropological sensibility, the majority are based on interview and survey data, and

⁵³ Centro de Estudios para del desarrollo laboral y agrario, Centre for the Study of Labour and Agricultural Development; and Gregoria Apaza Centre for the Promotion of Women

⁵⁴ Centro de Informacion y Desarrollo de la Mujer, Women's Centre for Information and Development. One of the Bolivian feminists mentioned, Sonia Montañón, went on to co-found PIEB, who currently publish very high quality Bolivian anthropological and sociological research.

⁵⁵ See for example Olivares (1996), López Jiménez (1997), Hola (1997) and Navia (1998)

there have been very few studies of urban areas utilising more qualitative interviewing and ethnographic methods.⁵⁶

There is a considerable and distinguished body of ethnographic literature on the rural Andes, most of which has been conducted by foreign anthropologists⁵⁷. Although there are clear differences between the rural and urban areas, the rural provenance of many of the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa, or their parents, means that rural ethnography can be very illuminating when carefully applied to the urban context. However, I consider it to be important to try to avoid presenting an image of the persistence of traditional rural values in the cities. Anthropology of the Andes has always been politically delicate, as debates over the role of history and memory illustrate. As various authors have argued, there has been a tendency to seek out the persistence of unchanging pre-colonial cultural values in the *campo* (Harvey 1994; Abercrombie 1998; Harris 2000). This stance has been particularly important for the indigenous movement, as the 'discovery' of pre-colonial and even pre-Inca Aymara values enables activists to claim authenticity. Nonetheless, the danger is that indigenous peoples are seen as remnants of a distant past, and the identification of the rural in the urban (the '*campo en la ciudad*') is similarly risky.

Good ethnography of the *campo* can be very useful for understanding some aspects of urban life, and building up a picture of what it means to be *cholo*, while remembering that it is only one side of people's identities. One of the themes to come out most strongly in Andean anthropology is that of community, a theme to which I shall return throughout this literature review and, indeed, the thesis. Work on community has focussed on the organisation of communal labour (Urton 1992) and the role of the communal authorities and community meetings (Carter and Mamani P 1989; Klemola 1997). Anthropologists have also discussed the importance of ritual, and especially the role of alcohol and sacrifice, for creating a sense of communality that includes the supernatural⁵⁸. All of these issues are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5 in

⁵⁶ This may be because of the ways in which sociology and anthropology are taught in Bolivian universities, and is not intended as a criticism, more an indication of where my project fits in. Less quantitative material has begun to appear more recently, published in particular by PIEB, a good example of which is Guaygua et al.(2000).

⁵⁷ With the exception of Xavier Albó, probably one of the most distinguished academics living and working in Bolivia. Albó was born in Spain, but emigrated to Bolivia in the 1950s.

⁵⁸ For example Heath (1987), Carter (1989), Saignes (1993), Harvey (1994) Fernandez Juarez (1995) and Abercrombie (1998).

particular, where I draw on the insights of rural ethnography to argue the case for a type of sociality that includes the spirits, and requires (and constitutes) a relational sense of self in Rosas Pampa. I have also used rural ethnography to assist in my analysis of gender in Chapter 6, focussing in particular on the links between gender cosmologies and the division of labour in the *campo*, and on the dissonances between the urban context and kinship and gender values deriving from rural roots (Harris 2000 [1978]). Both kinds of relationships, that is between humans and spirits and between kin, are mediated by food and feeding. The ways in which food is gifted shape sociality and senses of self.

Political anthropology, anthropology of the state

If my thesis is innovative, it is because it attempts to apply these concepts of sociality and, most importantly, self to the question of political agency and citizenship. This involves a consideration of the state, which is a presence throughout the ethnographic chapters that follow. Aihwa Ong claims that “because we [i.e. anthropologists] have tended to focus on the political dynamics of culture from below, we have paid very little attention to the ethnography of the state as an institution of government producing society” (1999: 50). However, I would argue that there is quite a considerable body of anthropological literature that does analyse the state, although there has been a rediscovery of its importance in recent years (Stepputat and Blom Hansen 2001). Even from early on in its existence as a sub-field, political anthropology attempted to characterise the state (e.g. see Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940). The examination of so-called ‘stateless societies’, and the debates over the reasons for the formation of the state in the 1970s (see Lewellen 1992) led to anthropologists questioning the naturalisation (and inevitability) of the Western state (Clastres 1977) and attempting to assess the distinctiveness of post-colonial states (Bayart 1993). Recent work has focussed on the state as idea (Tausig 1997), constructed through rituals (Kertzer 1988; Handelman 1990) and notions of imagined communities (Anderson 1991). The latter are based upon very concrete ways in which states create themselves and produce society, such as map-making, censuses, museums and development projects (Anderson 1991; Scott 1998; Qayum 2002). There is also a growing body of work on the ways in which state institutions function, discussing, for example, policy (Shore and Wright 1997), bureaucracy (Herzfeld 1992), the law and law courts (Harris 1996), and state violence (Stepputat 2001). Of particular note is recent work on corruption, an issue which is linked to bureaucratic cultures (Shore 2000), the narration of the state and

individuals' relationships to it (Gupta 1995), and to development.⁵⁹ We might say that contemporary concerns with corruption and institutionality, expressed in development agencies' emphasis on 'good governance' have replaced older narratives of development that focussed on modernization or dependency theories.⁶⁰

The issue of development also brings out a problem associated with defining the state anthropologically. Intuitively, 'development' seems to be a state concern, but in practice, it is increasingly being implemented by non-state organisations, such as multilateral development agencies and NGOs. Nonetheless, the role of the IMF in encouraging structural adjustment programs, and their effects on issues such as health and education, demonstrate the importance of Northern States (particularly the US) in setting the development agenda. The World Bank and bilateral development agencies are also clearly governmental. Where I discuss development in this thesis, principally in my analysis of micro-credit organisations in Chapter 7, I take a broad view of the state and government and include NGOs funded by bilateral development agencies such as USAID in my analysis. Anthropological critiques of development projects can be seen in this light too.⁶¹ We can trace a line in political anthropology from a colonial framework through world systems theory to a critique of colonialism and development (Vincent 2002). All these relate to an issue that is very important to contemporary anthropology (political and economic), namely the links between global and local processes. From a situation where ethnographers could retreat to 'their' village and ignore the world outside, anthropologists are now urged to take global economic and political processes into account (Gledhill 1994; Wilson 1997). Although it is difficult to do this in a PhD thesis, where the emphasis is so squarely on ethnography⁶², I do investigate the influence of transnational development discourses on the activities of some NGOs in El Alto. I also use this framework to discuss the local impact of educational reform that is motivated by global discourses of neoliberalism and differentiated citizenship. These 'projects of citizenship' allow me to analyse one aspect of the global in the local.

⁵⁹ Corruption is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

⁶⁰ I am grateful to Victoria Goddard for pointing this out.

⁶¹ See, for example, Ferguson (1990), Hobart (1993), Escobar (1995), Nelson and Wright (1995), Gardner and Lewis (1996), Crewe (1998), and Esteva and Prakash (1998)

⁶² Although see McNeish (2001). He traces the connections between transnational development discourses of decentralization and participation and the implementation of the Popular Participation Legislation in an *altiplano* community in the Department of Oruro.

Yet the focus of my thesis remains the local, and one of my assumptions is that local-level political dynamics are interesting in their own right, not just for what they reveal about deeper societal cleavages (Gledhill 1994). This was recognised by some early anthropology, especially that which focussed on patron-client relations at the local level (Schmidt 1977). Geographically restricted to the Mediterranean, albeit with some discussion of Latin America, the central insight of these authors was that in these societies brokers mediated the relationship between the local community and the national state (Blok 1974). Initially, anthropologists assumed that clientelism was a stage through which societies would pass on the way to a more modern form of party politics (Weingrod 1977 [1968]). However, newer research on the ways clientelism now manifests itself indicates that the clients' strategising and agency has probably been underestimated by academics and politicians, an insight I explore in Chapter 3 (Gay 1998; Auyero 2000). What both positions show is that it is not possible to separate local community politics from the national state, a trap into which some anthropologists of the 1980s and 90s fell, according to Akhil Gupta (2002). He was referring to anthropology of India, but a similar criticism could be made of much Andean ethnography, where there has been little sustained examination of the contemporary state. Exceptions to this general trend are ethnographies of the impact of specific legislation and development policy, such as Platt's discussion of the 1953 Agrarian Reform (1982), or recent work on the Popular Participation legislation (McNeish 2001). There has possibly been more ethnohistory on the impact of the colonial and republican states in the Andean *campo* than ethnography of the contemporary state (Platt 1982; Abercrombie 1998; Harris 2000).

In contrast, John Gledhill (1994) has argued that in political anthropology, a Weberian definition of the state as the complex of institutions with the monopoly on the legitimate use of force has led to an over-emphasis on the state inasmuch as state power is conceived of as purely coercive power. Following Giddens and Foucault, he points out that power is more diffuse than this, and that it inheres also in the ways in which individuals are monitored and administered. Nikolas Rose (1989; 1999) takes Foucault further, drawing on his later work on sexuality (1990 [1984]) as a methodological tool for an analysis of how individuals are brought to regulate our own behaviour and discipline our own bodies. He argues that government (the 'conduct of

conduct') occurs both inside and outside of the state-run institutions of Foucault's early work (e.g. 1977), and is focussed on the self and the body. I call specific instances of this kind of government, as they operate in contemporary Bolivia, 'citizenship projects' and discuss three of them in Chapters 5, 7 and 8.

Anthropology of citizenship

Turning to the specific issue of citizenship, it is fair to say that few anthropologists have explicitly addressed this concept. Yet citizenship has become a hotly-debated issue of political concern in Latin America and Europe. Social movements in 1990s Latin America increasingly formulated their demands in terms of 'full citizenship', not only for women but for indigenous people, gays and lesbians, Afro-Latinos and other marginalized groups (Dagnino 1998). In Britain and Europe, the EU is attempting to promote a feeling of European citizenship, conferences are held on 'citizenship and social cohesion' to consider the ramifications of the riots in Northern England in 2001 and the issue of asylum seekers, children are taught citizenship in schools, academic funding bodies such as the ESRC declare citizenship to be one of their thematic priorities, and a vast amount of books on citizenship have been published in the last 10 years or so.⁶³ An increased focus in development agencies on the funding of projects that address concerns about citizenship, defined as governance and political participation, connects the intellectual developments in the two continents.

It is possible that anthropologists have been hesitant about using such an obviously 'top-down' and universalising concept as an analytical tool. A comparable issue is the anthropology of human rights, an incipient but growing part of the discipline. Again, human rights are very 'top-down' and legalistic notions, which posit a universal essence of human nature, anathema to many anthropologists. However, as Richard Wilson points out in the introduction to his influential edited volume, Human Rights, Culture and Context (1997), human rights are a language of political struggle that people use to assert claims and entitlements. Marie-Benedicte Dembour argues that "human rights only exist because they are talked about"; thus, "human rights are (predominantly) extralegal not because they correspond to 'natural' moral rights but because they serve to articulate political claims which make sense in a particular social context" (Dembour

⁶³ For example, see Barbalet (1988), Hall (1989), (Oldfield 1990), Turner (1993), Twine (1994), Biener (1995), Kymlicka (1995), Lister (1997), Oommen (1997), Yuval-Davis (1999), Heater (1999), Isin (2000) and Stevenson (2001).

1996: 22, 33). Vered Amit (2002) makes a similar point about ‘community’, arguing that the fact that it is mobilised as a concept in various political contexts makes it an important object of study for anthropologists, even though a great deal of anthropological effort has been expended on deconstructing the notion of community to the point where it becomes practically empty (see also Cohen 2002). Nikolas Rose’s work (1999) is particularly good on the mobilisation of political concepts – in his case freedom – for the purposes of government.

However, the proposed research projects have a tendency to focus on representation and discourse rather than the embodied experience of rights, community, or citizenship⁶⁴; and this is where I argue that anthropology has the most to offer. As Ralph Grillo has commented, “in short, in a field dominated by political sociology, an ethnographically rooted comparative anthropology of citizenship is long overdue” (2001: 187). Anthropological research can provide some insight into local-level understandings and experiences of citizenship. Oddly enough, the best anthropological discussions of citizenship that do exist have focussed more on the articulations between transnational (or cosmopolitan) and national citizenship. The work of Aihwa Ong (1999), Ulf Hannerz (1990) and Daniel Miller (Miller and Slater 2000) stands out in this regard. Their transnational focus responds to the preoccupation with globalisation in political and economic anthropology that I discussed earlier. In contrast, my thesis focuses more on the articulations between *local* and national citizenship. I use the concept of citizenship gleaned from my reading of political theory, as a starting point from which to analyse people’s experience. My ethnographic focus informs my discussion of two of the issues that I consider to have been important for political theory of citizenship, specifically the question of citizenship as practice and/or status and the relationship between the individual and the collectivity.

⁶⁴ Csordas (1999) argues that anthropology generally should move away from an exclusive focus on representation and incorporate some analysis of embodied experience.

Citizenship, community and the self

Citizenship practice, political agency and community

T.H. Marshall's now normative definition of citizenship declared that:

Citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed. (Marshall 1983 [1950]: 253)⁶⁵

Marshall's Liberalism is evident in his vision of citizenship as predominantly a legal status of the individual. Political theorists have also viewed citizenship as a set of practices, especially related to participating in politics (Oldfield 1990; Turner 1993; Lister 1997; Yuval-Davis 1997). This theory of citizenship practice is influenced by a tradition of civic republicanism which goes back to the Greek democracies described by Aristotle in the *Politics* (1992).⁶⁶

On the whole, the emphasis of civic republicanism has been on the participation of citizens in politics as an essential part of creating the sense of community, or concord necessary for political life. Political agency is therefore a crucial element of citizenship. The conservatism of some late 20th Century civic republicanism, as expressed in the political communitarianism of Amitai Etzioni (1993) and of politicians such as Tony Blair, lies in its stress on the citizen's duty to participate in politics at the expense of an active role in creating the terms in which politics is discussed. This has been a key component of the demands of Latin American indigenous movements (Lee Van Cott 1994; Dagnino 1998).

I concur more with the view that citizenship is a bundle of practices rather than a status accorded to those who are "full members of a community". For example, an obvious anthropological question might be how (and by whom) is it decided who counts as a

⁶⁵ He provided this definition in an essay based upon a lecture given in 1950, and called *Citizenship and Social Class* (1983 [1950]). He hypothesized a progressive achievement of citizenship rights in England from civil rights won in the 18th century (rights to due process and property), through political rights (to vote and be elected) won in the 19th century, to the culmination of the achievement of social rights provided by the welfare state in the mid-20th century.

⁶⁶ Pericles, as recorded by Thucydides, placed great stress upon the political participation of Athenian citizens. The duty of political participation was later emphasised by Cicero, influenced by the Stoics, and much later, Macchiavelli, who stressed the obligation of the citizen-soldier in the *Discourses* (Oldfield 1990; Heater 1999). This tradition influenced the revolutions in America and (in part) France, both of which were inspirational for early republicans in Latin America. Through the 19th century, it was sustained by Hegel and then Tocqueville, in his *Democracy in America*, which highlights the enthusiasm of early Americans for political association. The most distinguished 20th Century proponent of civic republicanism was Hannah Arendt, primarily in *The Human Condition* (1998 [1958]), where she argued for a revitalisation of American society through civic engagement in politics.

full member of a community? But the construction of a sense of community is even more complex than this, and depends upon more than participation in political institutions. As with national communities, localised communities are under constant symbolic and discursive construction and therefore contestation from within (Cohen 1985; Anderson 1991). Earlier anthropological work did not entirely recognise this contestation, focussing instead on the creation of social order within a community and giving an impression of a largely stable set of social relations which constituted the structure of a society. More recent work (Amit 2002) aims to combine recognition of the discursively constructed nature of communities with a return to approaches that saw community in a more concrete sense, as being the locus of social relations.

Community must be generated, not only through explicitly political institutions. From early work by structural-functionalists influenced by Durkheim (1965 [1915]), it has become commonplace to see ritual functioning to bind people together in a community, through, for example, the operation of effervescence, or Turner's concept of *communitas* (Turner 1969). Approaching ritual as explicitly political was an important part of a 'second wave' of political anthropology in the 1960s (see essays in Swartz 1968), and has been rediscovered relatively recently. Recent work on European rituals (Boissevain 1992), and political rituals in Latin America (Lomnitz 1995; Banck 1998) engages with the issues of how exactly ritual practice constructs a notion of community: how social relations and symbols/discourse actually interact.

Other community-generating practices, such as community meetings and the organisation of communal labour are of central importance in the Andean region (Urton 1992; Klemola 1997). Andrew Canessa (1998) argues that Aymara peasants of Pocabaya are only considered to be full people as far as they work the land. This is important because through agricultural labour they enter into a relationship with the ancestors present in the land itself. There is a sense in which the ancestors/spirits are part of their community. This brings in an element central to my own material, which is the importance of a sense of collectively belonging to a place and having a relationship with a locality. In Rosas Pampa, as in rural areas of the Bolivian *altiplano*, place is made social, part of a web of social relations that involves both human beings and spirits that are allied very strongly to particular geographical locations. Those relations are maintained through gifting practices and notions of reciprocity (Abercrombie 1998).

This type of relationship is not entirely one of rights and responsibilities, and thus problematises the knee-jerk approach of political communitarians, who turn to responsibilities as a counter-weight to the liberal emphasis on rights⁶⁷. Part of this thesis' aim is to counter the general emphasis on rights and responsibilities, which depends upon the Marshallian idea that membership of a community (citizenship) involves primarily a sort of ownership of a basket of rights and corresponding duties.

The most consistent champions of community in political theory are the communitarians.⁶⁸ Communitarian political theory tends to have more in common with the earlier structural-functionalist anthropology, and with traditional sociological concerns about the threat to *Gemeinschaft* posed by urbanisation and industrialisation, than with more recent anthropological insights into the discursive side of community. Anglo-Saxon political communitarianism tends to reify the status quo, in its invocation of tradition, and tendency towards a homogenising vision of community. This is a trap into which philosophical communitarians also fall, because they assume away conflicts between competing ends which are internal to communities (Gutmann 1992; Mouffe 1993). Iris Young argues that communitarians do not provide us with a solid basis for a politics that can deal with diversity:

Community is an understandable dream ..., but politically problematic ... because those motivated by it will tend to suppress differences among themselves or implicitly to exclude from their political groups persons with whom they do not identify. (Young 1990: 300)

She uses the modern city as a model for overcoming some of these problems.

Proposing an idealised version of "the unoppressive city", defined as "openness to unassimilated others" as a model for a 'politics of difference', she argues against the ideal version of community that implies and relies upon face-to-face communication

⁶⁷ From Locke to John Stuart Mill, to more modern liberals like John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin, liberal citizenship has been seen as a status of the (predominantly male) individual. The rights associated with this status in theory allow individuals to pursue their conceptions of the good life, as long as they do not hinder other's similar pursuits (Oldfield 1990). This is the essence of liberal tolerance, and the state protects this status quo. In return citizens have minimal responsibilities which revolve primarily around keeping the state running, such as paying taxes, or participating in military service where the state is threatened.

⁶⁸ I follow Elizabeth Frazer (1998) in distinguishing between philosophical communitarianism and political communitarianism. The former is based upon a criticism of the abstract individualism of Liberal political thought and represented by philosophers such as Michael Sandel and Alisdair MacIntyre. See the collection by Avineri and de-Shalit (1992) for an overview of this debate. Political communitarianism is most clearly associated with the work of Amitai Etzioni (1993).

and values-sharing (1990: 319).⁶⁹ In what is admittedly a discussion of ideal types, she overstates the opposition between the mixing of the city and the ‘face-to-face’ communities of ‘tradition’. However, her vision of the city as a place where people meet and interact with others who are not like themselves is widely shared by those who challenge the nostalgia for *Gemeinschaft* (Phillips 1993; Holston 1999; Isin 2000). El Alto is a particularly good example of a city based upon the mixing of people: the very identity of those who live in El Alto, that of *cholo*, is a fluid and dynamic one. It is not an anonymous city, though, since small communities have been created within it, partially on rural models. This tension between face-to-face communities and anonymous city makes El Alto a productive subject of research into the politics of the ‘unoppressive city’.

The self and person in political theory and anthropology

This thesis will show that investigating the generation of community and a collective sense of political agency in Rosas Pampa requires a consideration of the notions of person and self operating there. Personhood and self have always been central to citizenship. In Athens, creating a sense of duty towards the *polis* was considered an absolutely crucial element of citizenship, and implied the creation of particular kinds of persons, through *paideia*, usually translated as education, but somewhat flattened in that translation. *Paideia* involved the creation of a sense of belonging to and investment in the *polis*, a sense that the individual was part of the collectivity and defined by it; also a masculine notion of civic virtue, or selfless devotion to civic duty.⁷⁰ In the 18th Century, Rousseau advocated his own program of *paideia* (Heater 1999). Education (*paideia*) is still inherent to citizenship, whether implemented through political participation or schooling (as described in Chapter 8). Educational work on the self is a form of citizenship project, government in a Foucauldian sense, as discussed above.

Liberal citizenship also depends on a particular conception of the self, since the focus on universality and the presumption of equality is a “shared civic identity” (Kymlicka 1995: 173) premised upon an “abstraction of self” (Yuval-Davis 1997: 70). John Rawls

⁶⁹ She draws upon Kristeva to argue that the subject is ‘in process’, and cannot be present to itself or know itself, much less know another. Understanding subjectivity in this way goes beyond the desire for social wholeness and identification that underlies racism and ethnic chauvinism – the desire to understand others as I understand myself.

⁷⁰ The greek word *aretē* became *virtus* in Latin and *virtù* in Italian (Machiavelli), deriving etymologically from the Latin *vir*, meaning man.

is the most distinguished recent proponent of this abstraction. The procedural model of politics he described in *A Theory of Justice* (1972)⁷¹ assumes a type of abstracted subjectivity that has been criticised by both feminists and philosophical communitarians.⁷² Communitarian political theorists criticise the bases of liberalism on 'possessive individualism' (in C.B. Macpherson's phrase) and argue that the liberal 'self-defining subject' is an impossibility. Michael Sandel argues that Rawls vision is of an "unencumbered self" prior to and independent of purposes and ends, denied the possibility of meaningful membership in a community that "engages the identity as well as the interests of the participants" (Sandel 1992: 19). The individual behind the Rawlsian 'veil of ignorance' is the epitome of rationality, but without sex or emotions; in addition, that individual is not allowed to consider community or familial ties which might make him/her think differently about how best to structure society (Sandel 1992; Frazer and Lacey 1995). Such an asocial individual is, for most communitarians, anthropologists and psychologists, impossible to envisage. In fact, one does not have to dig too far to realise that, since there is nothing to differentiate the individuals in the original position, there is, effectively, only one individual, the Kantian rational man (Pateman 1988; Barron 1993).

During the 1980s and 1990s, political liberalism entered a particularly virulent phase of abstracted individualism, influenced by theorists of a more libertarian bent such as Nozick and Hayek, and neoliberal economists such as Milton Friedman. They argued for a very strong notion of individual freedom and the reduction of the State to essentially the protector of private property and nothing else, a true 'nightwatchman' (Locke 1988 [1690]), whose only role is to protect the operations of the capitalist market. The upshot of this was the rise of the New Right in the US and UK, and a vituperative attack on the welfare state, social citizenship in Marshallian terms. These kinds of philosophies have been enacted in Bolivia as neoliberalism, encouraged by the IMF and the World Bank. In Bolivia and globally, citizens have been made responsible for our own fates, and for that of our families and communities, justifying increasing

⁷¹ Rawls proposed the development of political theory of the common good built upon a procedural model, where individuals are imagined to be in a contemporary version of the contractarian state of nature, the 'original position', and the structures they visualise, from this vantage point, are the best way of ordering society. The 'original position' consists of individuals behind a 'veil of ignorance', where they are unaware of their social positioning, sex, wealth, state of health, etc., when they decide upon such structures. He argued that this would lead to the fairest distribution of the common good.

⁷² (Okin 1991; Kittay 1997) (MacIntyre 1981; Sandel 1992; Walzer 1992).

State evasion of responsibility for social provision (Rose 1999, 2000; Gledhill 2001).⁷³

The ways in which we come to accept this situation are another example of non-coercive power as government through self-regulation. Chapter 6 discusses one of these citizenship projects in operation, in an investigation of micro-credit NGOs.

Thus, liberal citizenship theory both presupposes and imposes a particular form of subjectivity upon those subject to liberal political structures. The rational, autonomous (implicitly male) individual as the basis for liberal political thought implies that the rights of this citizen become the inevitable language of political expression, and the Liberal citizen the only form of political subjectivity (Barron 1993). Communitarian thought tends to simply replace rights with responsibilities, but the individual retains priority, although this time embedded in community (or perhaps 'encumbered') (MacIntyre 1981; Sandel 1992; Etzioni 1993).

Both Liberalism and Communitarianism are static versions of the relationship between person and self as defined by Marcel Mauss. Mauss differentiates between *personne*, as cultural category, and *moi*, usually translated as self, and meaning an individual's "conscious personality" (Mauss 1979 [1938]: 61; Morris 1994). Mauss' version of the modern notion of the person constitutes itself as a psychological being, so in effect he collapses *personne* and *moi* together (Mauss 1979 [1938]; Carrithers 1985). Later anthropologists pointed to the frequent tension between *personne* and *moi*, arguing that individual consciousness and identity operates within a dialectical relationship to cultural prescriptions of the person, both influencing and being influenced by 'culture' and cultural, social or political institutions (Rosaldo 1984; Cohen 1994). During the 1970s and 1980s, anthropological work on the self was oriented around the dichotomy of individual versus collective senses of self, following Mauss' lead. The tendency was to attribute collective, sociocentric senses of self to non-westerners and egocentric or individual senses to westerners (Shweder and Bourne 1984; Dumont 1986: 261). This meant there was little scope for concepts of the autonomous individual outside of

⁷³ Bolivian reforms such as the LPP can be seen as, in part, encouraging civic engagement as a replacement for State responsibility. For example, as a result of the popular participation legislation and educational reform, responsibility for educational infrastructure has been devolved to often poorly administered municipal governments, who disburse what money they can find in collaboration with community organisations such as the *Junta Escolar*. Some of my informants described this as privatisation. Such policies fit in well with the neoliberal philosophy of the roll-back of the State (Arnove 1997).

Western culture (Morris 1994).⁷⁴ The communitarian version of self is similar to the sociocentric self outlined by Dumont. Both suffer from the problem of denying individual agency, or the ability of self as psychological being to break out of the constraints of person as cultural category. This is the reason for communitarian conservatism, because the implication is that people are completely bound by their insertion in their community, which is static and uncontested. The liberal position maps to individualism, where self equals person and is prior to the collectivity. This is why liberalism cannot take into account the fact that people are embedded in communities, and therefore ends up creating everyone as white, rational, property-holding man. My thesis investigates the individual-collective relationship without assuming either a Liberal or a Communitarian explanation of agency, and approaching people as selves who are negotiating a space within varying citizenship projects of personhood.

Methods

This personal approach meant that I took a conscious decision to present people as individual characters, keeping pseudonyms consistent throughout the thesis and including a list of the principal actors on page 10. The ethnographic fieldwork for this thesis was conducted in Rosas Pampa in 1999-2000, where I lived for twelve months. My research has also drawn on trips to Bolivia in 1996, 1997 and 1998, comprising a total of 8 months. I ended up in Rosas Pampa as a result of contacts established with Grupo Solidaridad (Solidarity Group), a women's NGO based there, through Inneke Dibbits of TAHIPAMU.⁷⁵ The women of Grupo Solidaridad allowed me access to their office and telephone line throughout the time I lived in Rosas Pampa, although I rarely saw them, as they were working in schools all over El Alto. They introduced me to the local school and members of the Catholic youth group. Through the latter I met my landlady, who appears in this thesis as Doña Gregoria.

⁷⁴ From the late 1980s onwards, anthropology of the self, influenced by postmodernism, moved to question a coherent single self as the source of agency and subjectivity (Strathern 1988; Butler 1990; Rosenau 1992; Butler 1993). Recent work has compensated for the disembodied tendencies of the more extreme postmodern positions, and asserted the importance of embodiment for our experience of our selves (Moore 1994; Csordas 1999).

⁷⁵ Taller de Historia y Participación de la Mujer, or Workshop for the History and Participation of Women

Not only did Doña Gregoria very generously welcome me to her household, but she and her family allowed themselves to become the core of my research, discussing many aspects of their lives with me. Much of the intimate detail I use in this thesis derives from my close association with Doña Gregoria, her daughter-in-law Victoria and Victoria's mother, Doña Josefa, as well as my neighbours, Don Antonio and Doña Emiliana, uncle and aunt to Victoria. The exact relationships are outlined on page 10. As I spent more time in the zone I made more friends and found more informants, but these families remained the most important, along with Don Roberto, the local catechist and leader of the Church youth group. He later helped me to design a quantitative survey of households in the zone, which members of the youth group carried out. I analysed the results using MS Access and Excel and presented them to Don Roberto and the local priests before I left, as a thank you for their support and as a small contribution to their activities. I discuss the specific methodology of this survey in Appendix I.

However, I was particularly careful to avoid association with either the Catholic Church or Grupo Solidaridad. While I lived in Rosas Pampa, I divided my research into different 'spaces'. For some time I taught in the local school, as a substitute English teacher. When the full time teacher returned, she was unwilling to allow me to come into the school and conduct conversation classes. Apparently she thought I wanted her job. So my formal association with the school finished after a few months and I held some informal English classes for children of my friends and neighbours. However, I continued to attend school ceremonies and towards the end of my fieldwork period I was allowed to conduct some group interviews with 17 and 18 year olds. I also attended meetings of the *Junta Vecinal* committee and the General Assemblies, particularly in the run-up to the fiesta of 2000, and formally interviewed some of the *Junta Vecinal* leaders. Between January and September 2000 I went along to meetings of two micro-credit groups, participating in day-to-day discussions with the women present and also formally interviewing a number of them. Towards the end of my stay I attended services and other activities run by a small Evangelical group whose church was on my street. Needless to say, much of my research involved spending time on the streets of Rosas Pampa, talking with shopkeepers while I bought provisions, or going to the markets in El Alto with Doña Gregoria.

My partner came out to Rosas Pampa for the final six months of my fieldwork period. Not only did he provide moral support, but he also conducted much informal research of his own, reporting to me conversations he'd had with people, which I could then follow up in my research. We also discussed my ideas both in the field and back in the UK. In addition, he participated in a number of the events that make up this thesis, most importantly the fiesta dancing. I danced in two fiestas, one in the *pueblo* of Quilloma and one in Rosas Pampa. My partner came along to the former, although he did not dance formally. He also danced in the latter. I was lucky enough to be able to experience two fiestas in Rosas Pampa, once as audience member, once as performer. I found that the fiestas highlighted some particular methodological issues, especially with regard to how to represent and analyse my experience, which I discuss briefly here as indicative of wider methodological concerns. I felt that the dancing and drinking during the fiestas were important both for what they represented and for how they felt. I found the latter to be very difficult to capture in text, and turned to anthropologists of dance and embodiment for guidance.⁷⁶ Reading dances as text or discourse, as the structuralists of the 1970s did, can be dry and often confusing and does not do justice to the physicality and uniqueness of each dance experience. The logical alternative to words might seem to be video, but there have been significant debates about the utility of filming as representation of movement (see Varela 1996). Video 'flattens' the experience of the dance, and cannot represent the choices that must be made by individual dancers when improvising, or the physical experience of dancing. In response to such issues, some turned to phenomenological descriptions of dance experiences (Sheets-Johnstone 1979; Horton Fraleigh 1987; Sklar 2001), although this was not always well done, and when done badly can leave the reader asking what the analytical point might be. Navigating between the two extremes of excessive symbolism and over-emotive phenomenology is a problem when rendering most anthropological research in text, it just came into focus for me when I was writing about my experiences of dancing in the fiestas. I am fortunate in that I have been able to take advantage of multi-media facilities in my department, and include in this thesis a CD-Rom with some video footage, to provide at least some movement to the necessary two-dimensionality of my text.

⁷⁶ See Peterson Royce (1977) Hanna (1979), Ness (1992), Thomas (1995), Desmond (1997), or for overviews of the anthropology of dance, Kaeppeler (1978) and Reed (1998). On embodiment, see Csordas

Where I quote formal interviews I have used my own transcriptions of the tape recordings. Throughout I have tried to be as faithful as possible to local uses of Spanish. For many of the people I interviewed, Spanish was their second language, and therefore had many Aymara influences. I have deliberately not corrected their grammar, because I wanted to give a flavour of the colloquialisms that they used. For this reason, I have also left many of the expressions in their original Spanish, which in any case I have usually found to be more eloquent than the English equivalents when it comes to describing the Bolivian context. Definitions can be found in the glossary.

Structure of Thesis

This thesis moves broadly from a discussion of citizenship practice(s) to one of citizenship projects, exploring the individual-collective dialectic throughout. The next three chapters focus on the ways in which people of Rosas Pampa imagine and constitute themselves as a collective political subject, namely the zone. Chapter 2 introduces the status of *vecino* of Rosas Pampa, arguing that this is the equivalent local term for citizenship. I use the issue of development as a means to explore way of bringing out how the *vecinos* constitute themselves as a community, exploring how they have literally constructed the zone and the role of state and private authorities in this process. I also discuss the theme of corruption to illustrate how the *vecinos* exercise accountability and imagine themselves as a collective via their expectations of their authorities. The following chapter continues the theme of corporate political imagining in an analysis of the local elections held in December 1999. Although suffrage is usually seen as an individualised relationship between citizen and state, I show that both individual and collective interests operate before and during the election campaigns, through clientelistic politics. In Chapter 4 I discuss the ritual of the annual anniversary fiesta of the zone, and use a focus on dance and movement to argue that people experience collective belonging and a relationship with place in very physical ways.

Chapter 5 picks up on the religious element of the fiesta and develops it to explore the senses of self that are the foundations of *vecindad* (the status of being a *vecino*). The ‘colonial Catholicism’ of the fiesta devotion reveals a relational self that involves being part of a network of social relations that include place and the spirits. In this chapter, I

oppose this version of self to the 'anti-community' promoted by Evangelical Protestantism, in order to consider a different way of being part of a collectivity, mediated through an individualised sense of self built on the experience of a one-to-one relationship with God. Chapter 6 explores the development of the relational self in more depth, picking up on the importance of being part of an adult heterosexual couple for being a *vecino* and full citizen of the zone. I use a case study of Victoria and Carlos, a young couple at the beginning of their life together, and the involvement of various family members in keeping them together to argue that individuals are embedded in their communities in a dynamic and not automatic way.

My focus on the self is extended in Chapters 7 and 8 to a discussion of citizenship projects operating in contemporary El Alto. The former explores the informal economy in Rosas Pampa and discusses two micro-credit groups attended by Victoria and other Rosas Pampa women. Like the Evangelicals' modernising projects, micro-credit NGOs attempt to create individual citizens, who in this case conduct their economic activities on the basis of market rationalities rather than embedded, kinship-based rationalities. This conforms to a neoliberal project of creating active citizens responsible for their own welfare. Chapter 8 discusses schooling, again on the surface an individualising personhood project which aims to create Bolivian citizens who are distanced from their indigenous cultural roots and relationship to local place, and who attribute their position in society to their personal abilities rather than structural disadvantage. The conclusion sums up the main themes of the thesis, discussing the relationship between citizens and state in Rosas Pampa, sense of place and embodiment.

CHAPTER 2

CONSTRUCTING THE ZONE

I begin my exploration of local citizenship practices and the tensions between individual and corporate forms of citizenship with an examination of politics in Rosas Pampa. The *vecinos* (residents) of Rosas Pampa have built the zone both figuratively and literally, constructing a sense of community in part by organising themselves to develop their zone. This has happened as a result of the *vecinos*' own initiatives and the ability of the zonal authorities to gain services for Rosas Pampa from the state and private providers. The zone constitutes itself in part through its relation to the state: in a negative way as attested by the self-constructed nature of development in Rosas Pampa in the absence of the state, and in a positive way as the *Alcaldía* of El Alto (and private NGOs) distribute resources through zonal authorities.

The community leaders are subject to formal and informal mechanisms of control, which show how the *vecinos* also imagine themselves as a collective entity through their expectations of the authorities and exercise of accountability. The theme of corruption is brought in to discuss these issues, as through rumour and gossip *vecinos* hold their leaders to account pre-emptively, establishing a sense of the public good and an obligation on the part of the leaders to serve that good, expressed especially in the successful achievement of public works for the zone. The collective of *vecinos* attempts, not always successfully, to keep control in the face of the individual leaders' personal interests. The chapter responds to Antero Klemola's argument that community government and leadership in the Andes have been under-researched at the expense of ritual and the symbolic aspects of constituting community (1997).¹

Some notes on terms: community, zone, vecino, pueblo

Latin America as a region has had a strong tradition of community organisation, through Trades Unions, Christian Base Communities, indigenous authorities, and women's groups, for example. The *altiplano* is one of the areas where indigenous forms of organisation have remained vibrant: in the relative absence of centralised state power

¹ This thesis does not ignore ritual, however. Chapters 4 and 5 complement the focus on government in this and the following chapter, with an examination of the construction of community through ritual, ingestion and movement. Klemola's work is an especially thorough discourse analysis of community

over much of the rural Bolivian *altiplano*, a mixture of pre-Incaic, Incaic, colonial as well as republican authorities constituted at different historical moments hold sway, running the community, judging violations of customary law, organising annual fiestas, and negotiating on behalf of the community with development NGOs, anthropologists and the state (Rasnake 1988; Klemola 1997; Abercrombie 1998). As this chapter will show, the articulation between values of duty, prestige and material gain that underlie community organization in El Alto is similar to that in the *campo*. I discuss these issues in the context of a debate common in the anthropological and sociological literature on rural-urban migration about whether migrants become more individualistic once they move to the city. Much of the literature stresses a more individualistic and less collective orientation on the part of those who move to the city (Altamirano 1984; de Soto 1989; Roberts 1995; Rivera Cusicanqui, Arnold et al. 1996; Gill 1997; Canessa 1998; Llanos Layme 1998). However, authors also recognise migrants' need to organise collectively, and some argue that rural-urban migrants actively seek out new forms of collective allegiance once in the city (e.g. Albó, Greaves et al. 1983; Sandoval and Sostres 1989) (Gill 1997) (Perlman 1976; Gill 1993; Calderon and Szmukler 2000). I argue in this chapter that many of those 'new' forms are similar to those that operate in the *campo*.²

People who live in the city of El Alto tend to belong to a number of overlapping communities, which include occupational ones organised by Trades Unions. The community of Rosas Pampa can be seen primarily as a community of choice for most adult residents, or *vecinos*, who have made the decision to move, and stay, there. The term *vecino* means neighbour, so is a person-to-person relationship, but it is also a category that roots someone to a particular space, meaning resident or inhabitant. People frequently described themselves as *vecinos* of their zone. The term 'zone' is administrative: El Alto is divided into six urban districts and one rural one, which are then divided into zones, of varying sizes. At the head of the local government of El Alto is the *Alcalde* (Mayor) and Council, and the *Alcalde* nominates *Sub-Alcaldes* to preside over each district. Each zone has a *Junta Vecinal* (Residents' Committee), voted for by the *vecinos*, and called by them the "authorities or leaders of the zone"

meetings in the rural community of Kila Kila in the Bolivian altiplano. Many of his points about the rules governing public speaking resonate strongly with my experience of meetings in Rosas Pampa.

² Some important new forms of community are those encouraged by the Evangelical churches, which I discuss in Chapter 5.

(“autoridades/dirigentes de la zona”). The term ‘zone’ indicates the territoriality of people’s sense of allegiance to place, and to other people with similar allegiances.

In many ways, *vecino* also indicates this sense of place and territoriality. In common use today, the term also has a substantial historical heritage, as it has been used to indicate the legal status of being a member of a town in Spain since medieval times: citizenship in the Classical, or Ancien Regime, sense.³ *Vecindad* was enjoyed by home-owners who were usually born in a particular town. *Vecinos* had various rights, such as access to common land, and they attended open council meetings, at which they called themselves collectively the community or the “Republic” (“*la Republica*”) (Nader 1990). The use of the latter term demonstrates that similar ways of imagining collectivity translated to the New World, where government was structured into ‘two republics’, as I described in Chapter 1. The notion of *vecino* translated directly, largely because the Conquistadors had a fundamentally urban outlook. Helen Nader argues that in early 16th Century Castile, “Noble lord, citizen-farmers, royal notary and legal witnesses all shared a vision of their society as a landscape of municipalities peopled with citizens”. This “municipal urge” meant that the Conquistadors often portrayed the New World in their writings “as a patchwork quilt of municipalities” (1990: 27, 41). It is striking that this could also describe the view of contemporary Bolivia promoted by the Popular Participation legislation of 1994.

The tension between the particularity of *vecindad* and the universality of the Liberal *ciudadanía* (citizenship) is a central one today, and at the heart of this thesis. It is not a new tension, though. The citizenship projects of the 19th Century were built on the understanding of what it meant to be a *vecino* and also defined against it (Carmagnani and Hernandez Chavez 1999). Francois-Xavier Guerra points out that “contrary to the modern citizen, who is an individual component of an abstract collectivity – the nation or the people –, the *vecino* is always a man (*sic*) who is concrete, territorialized and rooted”(1999: 42). Guerra considers the two categories to be fundamentally opposed. However, early republican legislation defined citizenship through *vecindad*, for example only making *vecinos* into citizens, as in the case of Mexican electoral legislation of the early 19th Century. These linkages show the co-existence of a plurality of definitions of

citizenship at the time, and in particular the corporate nature of Latin American society: the 19th Century Mexican commentator Mariano Otero called Mexico “a society of societies” (Carmagnani and Hernandez Chavez 1999: 374).

In Rosas Pampa today, *vecino* is a less exclusive category than it was historically, referring both to home-owners and those who have rented their homes for a long while. I first came across it when I asked women in a micro-credit group how they knew each other. For many, kinship relations were most important, but some were simply *vecinas*, who were known to them, *conocidas*. Not only does the term *vecino* persist today, but the corporate, rooted and physical form of citizenship that it implies is central to local understandings of citizenship in Rosas Pampa. People’s attachment to their zone is lived in part through responsibilities to it as a communal entity, responsibilities that are especially acute for leaders. That attachment is central to their construction of their citizenship. It is not exclusive, though: the urban affiliation denoted by the status of *vecino* operates alongside a more rural identity, that of *campesino*, or peasant.⁴ For many of those who migrated from the countryside, and often for their children, their *pueblo*, or village of birth is felt as a stronger affiliation than that towards their place of residence in El Alto, one of fate rather than choice,⁵ even if in practice they spend more of their time as *vecinos* than as *campesinos*.

When I asked school children to talk about ‘my *pueblo*’ in group interviews, they generally agreed that it was one’s place of birth. But in practice, children called their parents’ village their *pueblo* even if they were born in El Alto, and no one I spoke to ever called El Alto or Rosas Pampa their *pueblo*. *Pueblo* is a very emotive term, which can also mean ‘people’ or ‘nation’, particularly when used by politicians. First- and second-generation migrants in Rosas Pampa maintain very strong links with their *pueblos*. Around a quarter of those I surveyed visited their *pueblo* between two and four times a

³ This seems to be the case for several parts of Spain, particularly Castile (Vassberg 1984; Nader 1990). A search of the Senate House archives of the University of London reveals references to *vecino* in documents from Madrid, Barcelona and Seville; and from the 16th to the 19th centuries.

⁴ Some anthropologists have used *vecino* as an ethnic or class-based category of *mestizos* or local notables, although I have been unable to find a sustained anthropological discussion of the term (Crandon 1985; Abercrombie 1991; Weismantel 2001). The common factor has been that of *vecinos* dwelling in a town. This thesis aims to avoid simplistic dichotomies between Indian/rural and *mestizo*/town; and I deliberately focus more on the territoriality of *vecino*, because this seems to me to be more faithful to the local uses of language. *Vecino* may become ethnicised when it is a category applied to others rather than being a self-definition, if ethnic categories are defined at the boundaries between self and other.

year, and about a fifth more than once a month, or 'very frequently' (see Appendix I). Only about a fifth said that they never visited. Women visit more often than men, usually to help with agricultural duties and/or to look after family members who still live in the countryside. Some go once or twice a month if their *pueblos* are nearby, while others go less often, but stay for a fortnight or a month or two, particularly at harvest time. They bring potatoes and other supplies back with them to the city, sometimes to sell but mostly as stocks for family consumption. A number of people still own land in their *pueblo*, and return to sow and harvest potatoes, quinoa, and other crops.

At the time of the April 2000 mobilisations, sympathy for the protesting *campesinos* was widespread in Rosas Pampa, despite the fact that city-dwellers were the ones who suffered from the price rises resulting from the blockades. For some people it was definitely the *campesinos* who were protesting, that is to say people who were different from them. But a comment by Don Alberto, a long-time *vecino*, hinted at something more. He said once "we have no other weapons with which to defend ourselves" ("no tenemos mas armas con que defendernos"). This 'we' and 'us' speaks of an identification with the peasants that goes beyond mere sympathy. On the whole, the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa recognised that they were different from the people who live in the *campo*, largely because they had become accustomed to city life. But, although the *campesinos* in their *pueblos* might be different – they might drink more, eat better food, be stronger or work harder – they are still kin. I only ever heard the Spanish word for community (*comunidad*), used in relation to countryside affiliations. One person translated *ayllu*⁶ for me as *comunidad*.

Much anthropology has recognised the slipperiness of the term 'community', and has ended up focussing on local mobilisations of the word, on the basis that, despite the difficulties of definition, the persistence of the term "provides a backhanded testament to the continued popular saliency of this concept" (Amit 2002: 1). Here I wish to do something slightly different, by glossing a sense of relationship to place and to others who live in that place as 'community', although acknowledging the problems associated with the word. Keeping to specifics will, I hope, avoid some of the most obvious

⁵ See Little (2002) for discussion of the importance of distinguishing between communities of fate and communities of choice.

⁶ The *ayllu* is a well-studied form of indigenous community organization in the Andes. See, for example, Platt (1982), Urton (1992) and Harris (2000) for more details.

difficulties, and in that spirit, this chapter focuses on the community authorities, that is the *Junta Vecinal* and the *Junta Escolar* (Parents' Association).

The juntas

This section introduces the local community authorities, and, with a discussion of gender, begins to address the issue of how representative the community authorities are of individual members, and how individual members assert their interests and opinions within the community. Adult residents of Rosas Pampa are represented by the zonal *Junta Vecinal*, (also called *Junta de Vecinos*), and if they have children at the local school, as most of them do, by the *Junta Escolar*. The *Junta Vecinal* is led by an elected committee of 14 who meet roughly every two weeks to a month, and weekly around the time of the fiesta. The composition of these meetings fluctuated, but the president would always be there, and usually around 6 committee members would attend, more in the run-up to the fiesta. Every two to three months they would hold a General Assembly of all the residents of the zone on the basketball court by the Health Centre, which about 150 people would attend.



Plate 4. General Assembly of the *Junta Vecinal*

Given that there are 800 households in Rosas Pampa, not all of which are occupied, attendance is reasonably high. In my survey a remarkable 77% of respondents said that they regularly attended some form of civic activity, and most of them went to the

General Assemblies. Usually the heads of households attend, and certainly the *Jefes de Calle* (lit. chiefs of the street), who are then supposed to inform the residents on their streets about the meeting. Some streets had more formal organisations, and would meet regularly to discuss issues such as security, and the decisions of the General Assembly. *Junta Vecinal* leaders did not have to work particularly hard if they did not want to, although the president was always active. Their primary responsibility throughout the year was to obtain *obras* (public works) for the zone.⁷ They were also in charge of organising the anniversary fiesta every 14th September, discussed in Chapter 4.

The *Junta Escolar* consisted of three leaders (a president, vice-president and treasurer) who would work alongside the Headmaster of the school, and two or three times a year call a meeting of all the parents of children at the school. They were responsible for implementing decisions taken by the Federation of *Juntas Escolares* in El Alto regarding mobilising parents for marches and demonstrations, and, with the Headmaster of the school, they coordinated the parents' involvement in gaining various *obras* for the schools, from political parties⁸, the municipality, the Federation of *Juntas Escolares* and NGOs.

Not everyone who lives in Rosas Pampa goes to the General Assemblies of the *Junta Vecinal* or the *Junta Escolar*, although between the two they probably manage to convene most residents at some point. If an adult cannot go, then they will often send an older son or daughter as their representative. Although attendance at meetings has dropped in recent years, important information does filter through: for example, when there was the possibility of the municipal government paving streets, it was announced in a General Assembly that individual households had to make sure they had organised the building of the kerb outside their houses, otherwise the street would not be paved. In the following few weeks, I noticed one resident of my street out finally building the kerb outside his house (most people on the street had done this years before). Our *Jefe de Calle* had probably been to ask him to get the work done.

The *Junta Escolar* has a more authoritarian way of organising its members: the parents have special identity cards, which note how many of their quotas for building work and other expenses they have paid, and fines, often for not turning up to demonstrations. If

⁷ These could be a sewage system, electricity, street lighting, a square, or a park, etc.

they are not up to date, their child cannot get their school record, which means that they cannot register at any school at the beginning of the academic year. So, although not every parent comes to the meetings, the vast majority contribute financially to the *Junta Escolar*'s work. Usually, people feel that if they have to contribute financially they want to go along to the meeting to supervise what is happening with the money. The *Junta Escolar* meetings, which are less frequent than the *Junta Vecinal* ones, are often better attended. The gender balance of those attending *Junta Escolar* meetings is almost directly inverse that of attendance at *Junta Vecinal* assemblies: at the former, the proportion is roughly two thirds female, one third male. The *Junta Escolar* meetings are held on Saturday afternoons, which is a time when more women are in the zone relative to the men, many of whom work on Saturdays, while *Junta Vecinal* General Assemblies are held on Sunday mornings, when the men are back from work. There is also an obvious connection between strong perceptions of women's responsibilities for their children's schooling, associated with their reproductive responsibilities, and of men's status as head of household when discussing community affairs – a division of labour in working for the community.

This issue of gender balance raises an obvious question: who exactly do the *Juntas* represent? On the surface, the answer would seem to be that it is the men who decide for the community, and certainly in both sets of meetings it is predominantly the men who do the talking.⁹ During the General Assemblies, the women would sit on one side of the circle, taking up around a quarter to a third of the space. The men all remained standing, occasionally stepping forward to speak. The problem is that it is difficult to isolate which interests might differ along gender lines, because people did not represent conflicts in that way. While I was there, there was consensus between men and women on the priorities for the zone and the *Juntas*, despite the fact that men seemed to make the decisions: for example, much decision-making seemed to occur in the very male arena of the weekend football matches, when the *Junta Vecinal* leaders would drink beer

⁸ See the following chapter for a more detailed discussion of this.

⁹ Arendt (1998 [1958]) and Castoriadis (1992) both point to the importance of speech for the operations of Greek democracies. Discussion is certainly key in this particular instance of direct democracy, although not purely in the forum of the General Assembly. Klemola (1997) makes some very interesting points about fear of speaking in public, which meant that NGOs working in Kila Kila, Bolivia, became very concerned that only the authorities were speaking, feeling that they were not fully representative. However, he notes that on many occasions people actually only wanted the authorities to speak, since they had previously decided among themselves what they would say. Also, he argues, the fear of talking

and watch the football together, along with other prominent male members of the community. However, during the week, more general discussions occurred at home or in the female spaces of shops, the market, or in the micro-credit group meetings. The children also discussed matters of import to the zone, at school and while playing, and reported back to their parents. At the General Assemblies, the women present do make their opinions known, through the comments they make among themselves: they position themselves right next to the leaders, who they knew would hear their comments.

The involvement of women in the creation of formalised and public community consensus depends to a certain extent upon the ways in which gender relations are negotiated in the household (the subject of Chapter 6) and it is often the case that women are ‘in charge’ there (Harris 2000 [1978]). Certainly, many men who are absent for most of the week at work get much of their information on community public opinion from their wives’ involvement in local social networks during the week, as well as from the discussions around the football field on a Sunday. However, it would certainly be important to remain sceptical about the policy initiatives and NGO rhetoric that privilege the *Juntas* as the only legitimate grass-roots organisations, which don’t just **represent** the community, rather, in many senses, **are** the community. Some feminist NGOs in El Alto argue that the *Juntas Vecinales* in particular exclude women, and have a number of development programs that are based around capacity-building for female leaders so that they can gain important positions in the *Juntas Vecinales* (Ruiz 1993; Molyneux and Lazar forthcoming). In Rosas Pampa, the only female *Junta Vecinal* committee member was in charge of “women’s issues” (“Vinculación Femenina”), and very rarely came to meetings. By contrast, one of the three leaders of the *Junta Escolar*, the Treasurer, was female.

was an important aspect of communality, expressing the members’ fear of and respect for the community.

Local development and the 'self-construction' of Rosas Pampa

In this section, I discuss the citizenship practices around local development in order to illustrate the ways in which community membership mediates the relationship between individual citizen and the state. This is crucial to my argument about the collective nature of *cholo* citizenship in Rosas Pampa, because it shows how the state creates the community of Rosas Pampa as an administrative entity, first by requiring the *vecinos* to develop the zone without the state's help (despite the state, in fact); and later, by administering local development through the municipal government-zone articulation. The role of para-statal organisations such as NGOs in the construction of community in Rosas Pampa is also brought out. The day-to-day administration of El Alto relies upon a set of brokers at neighbourhood level, who have become nodal points for the coordination of the service providers to the zone of Rosas Pampa, because of their ability to stand in for the 'community' and the 'grass-roots'. The 1990s reforms, principally the Law of Popular Participation and the Education Reform Law, have meant that the local *Junta Vecinal* and *Junta Escolar* stand at an interface between the State and civil society. They are part of the process through which government channels development money to Rosas Pampa. International NGOs also channel money through them, and are often better patrons than the local or national government for Rosas Pampa.¹⁰ They are also at the forefront of the ways in which the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa have constituted their community.

Rosas Pampa was originally part of a *hacienda*, whose land was distributed among its former peons in the Agrarian Reform of 1953.¹¹ Thirty peasants gained two hectares each, for which they had to pay compensation to the former owner of the hacienda. They then organised themselves as an Agrarian Union to supervise division of the land, and from the mid-1960s, began the process of legal recognition as an urban area. They eventually achieved this formal status in April 1983, although the date from which people count the founding of the zone of Rosas Pampa was September 1975 when they changed the Agrarian Union to a *Junta Vecinal*. During the 1970s, the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa conducted a long struggle against the railway company, which at various points

¹⁰ The *Juntas* are also increasingly finding themselves representing the community to private enterprises, such as the electricity or waste disposal companies. However, my material for this is limited, so I focus here primarily on local government and NGOs.

¹¹ The historical information here is from (Musch, Valdez et al. 1994); a book produced as a result of participatory research conducted in Rosas Pampa by the Dutch NGO APS.

attempted to take control of their land, by dubious measures. Although the *vecinos* could not meet during the day, because this was in the time of the dictatorship and they were persecuted by the police, they met at night in order to plan street blockades, demonstrations and strikes. They were ultimately successful in repelling the railway company, despite reports of generous compensation for *vecinos* who agreed to move away from Rosas Pampa, and for the leaders who persuaded them to do so (Musch, Valdez et al. 1994).

In 1999/2000 only a couple of residents actually mentioned this struggle to me, while another pointed me to the book by Mirjam Musch *et al* (1994) as an authoritative source for the zone's history. However, many had a sense of a 'before', when Rosas Pampa, and, indeed, El Alto, was "empty really, pure prairie" ("vacío nomás, puro pampa"). Nowadays, the zone is full of buildings, and "has everything", according to Don Julián, the Secretary – electricity, water, a sewage system.¹² People recognised the role of the *Junta Vecinal* in mobilising the community to gain development for the zone, sometimes contrasting today's incumbents with their more active predecessors:

"The *Juntas*, well it seems as though they don't care about the zone. Before they were good, the zone's *Juntas*, but now, they just become leaders, and ... it's not like it was before."

("Las Juntas, parece que no se preocupan de la zona. Más antes eran buenas de la zona, trabajaban, ahora nomás que entren, y ... no es así como antes.")

Many, whether committee member or ordinary *vecino*, attributed the waning enthusiasm for their authorities to the fact that most of the battles had been won. Since the *vecinos* no longer need to band together to get infrastructure for the zone, people are less interested in participating in General Assemblies, much less in paying monthly quotas to support the activities of the leaders. However, most of the *vecinos* have experience of working together to gain benefit for the zone, whether through paying quotas for the building of classrooms in the school, or the responsibility to build one's own kerbstone before the municipality will pave the streets. Many also contributed labour to build the Health Centre and the football pitches, and install the electricity and sewage systems; and nearly every home-owner has built their own house. They have built Rosas Pampa in very concrete ways, drawing on a strong rural tradition of communal work

¹² The latter two came in 1994, part of the development project that included the participatory research exercise which was published in (Musch, Valdez et al. 1994).

(Urton 1992), and contributing to what one worker from a cultural association called El Alto's "self-constructed" nature. Their willingness to do this is reflected in a particular strand of current development orthodoxy, neoliberal in focus, which seeks to minimise the State as far as possible, privatising public service functions so that they are taken over by NGOs, and putting communities themselves in charge of their own development – self-help as 'participation'.

In the past, the *vecinos* turned to international NGOs for help in the development of their zone. Most of the *obras* procured for the zone and the school by the *Juntas* were funded by the Dutch NGO APS, which had been active in the zone for a long time. The municipal government had provided street-lighting, and some help with the installation of the sewage system, but APS helped with Rosas Pampa's electricity, water, street lighting, a health centre and sewage system, as well as a significant expansion of the school's classroom facilities, and a toilet for the pupils. They provided the materials for the buildings, and the residents the manual labour. During the year that I was there, they funded the construction of a Community Centre, using surplus left over from the quotas that *vecinos* had paid for the installation of the sewage system.

Development agencies' privileging of NGOs notwithstanding, APS' service provision was not particularly good. At several General Assemblies and in informal conversations, the residents complained vigorously about poor treatment at the health centre. Several people that I knew would not go to the health centre if they were ill, but would go to that in the neighbouring zone of Santiago II, because they got better treatment there. In the General Assemblies, there were complaints about the behaviour of the nurses, but primarily the problem was with it not fulfilling its supposed role as a 24-hour centre. It isn't open at around 7am or at the weekends, which are the only times some people can attend. One resident pointed out that when his daughter had an accident on a Sunday afternoon, he could not go to the centre at 4pm, because it was closed. He said "[to say they are open] 24 hours is just making fun of the *vecinos*. We aren't toys, nor are we animals" ("[decir] 24 horas, es una burla al vecino. Nosotros no somos juguetes, ni somos animales"). The *Junta Vecinal* wrote a letter to APS about the fact that their 24-hour centre was anything but, but received a letter back informing them that there was nothing that could be done.

In fact, although they did not explain this in the letter, at the time, APS was undergoing serious restructuring, as the Dutch government no longer wanted to fund the health centre projects it had initiated over much of South El Alto. So they were negotiating with the new Mayor to have the municipality take charge of the centres. Eventually, the running of the centres was taken over by Radio Fides, a catholic charity. The whole process took months, so it is in some ways unsurprising that the *Junta Vecinal* failed to get anywhere. However, the NGO in effect simply ignored the *Junta Vecinal*, and would not make its doctors fulfil their responsibilities to the zone. What this example shows is that the *Junta* had no means by which to force private service providers to fulfil their obligations. Building things was easy: they got the materials, and then organised the work. However, when it came to service provision, all they could do was write polite letters requesting good service, which were often simply ignored.¹³

There are also signs that the willingness to 'participate' in the zone's development is diminishing, or at least has its limits. Parental involvement in the recent construction of classrooms was primarily through the payment of quotas for workmen's wages rather than the provision of voluntary labour as one might expect from NGO accounts of these kinds of projects¹⁴, although some women helped clear stones. At one General Assembly, a young *Jefe de Calle* proposed that the *vecinos* get together to pave their streets, but was voted down because other people pointed out that it was the municipality's responsibility, since that was what they paid their taxes for. This highlights an incongruity in the neoliberal vision of the active citizen, based upon an ethos of public service, and often justifying State evasion of responsibility (Rose 1999, 2000), which is that eventually the 'active citizens' begin to ask what the State should do as its part of the bargain.

Their experience of 'self-construction' has brought the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa together as a community, and created a sense of Rosas Pampa as an entity with certain needs for *obras* such as paved streets, or a square. The *vecinos* recognise and accept an active role in

¹³ They were in a similar position with private companies, such as Clisa, the rubbish company, or Electropaz, who were responsible for the street lighting. Both these companies provided an appalling service: in my year in Rosas Pampa, not more than one light on my street ever worked, and that in patches. We also had weeks of strikes by Clisa workers (because the Mayor refused to pay municipal debts to Clisa, who then did not pay their workers), and a consequent building up of ugly piles of unhygienic rubbish in the streets, as nothing was done to settle the dispute or provide alternative methods of rubbish collection.

¹⁴ See Nelson (1995) for a discussion of participation in development projects.

meeting those needs, and making Rosas Pampa better. However, the way in which development is administered in El Alto places them in the position of supplicants, consumers of development services in a highly unequal power relationship where they need to appeal to a mixture of state and private bodies for assistance, rather than citizens with some sort of legitimate expectation of the state. Private providers are not bound by those kinds of citizen expectations, and there is no real accountability towards those that they choose to help (Edwards and Hulme 1995; Molyneux and Lazar forthcoming). Neoliberal constructions of citizens as consumers (see Yuval-Davis 1997) disregard these kinds of power differentials.

Local government, local development and popular participation

The issue of development, then, illustrates well the ways in which the state operates (or fails to operate) in an area such as Rosas Pampa. Unfortunately, the local manifestation of the state seems little better than private bodies such as NGOs. Local governmental inefficacy is the main reason that El Alto is so 'self-constructed'. Both *Juntas* in Rosas Pampa had to negotiate with the *Alcaldía* in order to develop the zone, understood as successfully bidding for *obras*, but this was no easy task. Until 2000, no one entity was in charge of urban development at the municipal level. Largely because of the weakness of municipal government, the central government had bypassed the *Alcaldía* by creating a Presidential Delegate for El Alto, who was responsible for channelling central government money and some money from international NGOs. By 1999, he was publishing draft proposals for El Alto's urban development (Obermaier, Perez Garriga et al. 1999) and supervising the participatory planning processes that were in theory the responsibility of the *Alcaldía*. In 1999-2000, after the change-over in municipal administration, the new Mayor, Jose Luis Paredes, sought to regain some sort of control for the *Alcaldía*, as the example of the reorganisation of APS's health centres shows. He also engineered the sacking of the Presidential Delegate.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Law of Popular Participation (LPP), of 1994, was a remarkably ambitious attempt at creating an effective system for local development in Bolivia, as well as being an attempt to take into account the corporate nature of Bolivian society (Secretaría Nacional de Participación Popular 1997; Gray Molina 2002). The legislation provides resources which should enable the municipality to pay for *obras*, and a framework through which *Alteños* can demand *obras*. It does require a minimum of institutionality from the municipalities, especially in areas of high

population. In El Alto, its proper implementation has been severely retarded, suffering from the inefficiency, corruption and politicisation of local government. The *Alcaldía* of El Alto was utterly chaotic during the whole of the Condepa¹⁵ administration of 1989-99: people were constantly moved around different offices, or just hired and fired as corruption scandals led to the resignation of one Mayor after another. As different parties gained control over different departments in the municipality, their supporters would come into those jobs.¹⁶ This made it very hard to follow through the process of obtaining an *obra* for the zone from beginning to end.

The *Junta Vecinal's* main priority during the year that I was there was getting the streets paved or asphalted. When I asked women from Rosas Pampa what their wishes for the zone were, nearly all began with paving the streets; and in the survey I conducted, 37% of respondents mentioned paving the streets as a priority wish. This was clearly something that they could not appeal to APS for, and the procedure for dealing with the *Alcaldía* was incredibly complicated.¹⁷ The whole process is called a *tramite*, and proceeded as follows. First, the *Junta Vecinal* had to formulate a *solicitud*, a letter requesting a particular *obra*. If this got the support of the Supervisory Committee (Comité de Vigilancia) it would get included in the POA (Plan Operativo Annual, or Annual Operative Plan) for that year. This turned it into a *carpeta*, i.e. a file, and something that would happen (in theory), and would go through the *Alcaldía's* processes for design, budget allocation, tender and eventual work. However, this last stage was extremely fragile. Functionaries supporting a *carpeta* might get moved to a different job, they would usually ask for something in the file to be re-written, often several times and requiring the services of lawyers; budgets would be allocated, then taken away; election imperatives could come into play (one functionary offered to speed up a *carpeta* in late 1999 if the *Junta* could get various people out to demonstrate

¹⁵ See glossary, and Chapter 3, for a discussion of Condepa, the political party.

¹⁶ The LPP did lengthen the mayoral term from two years to five, and the recent Law of Municipalities prevents councillors sacking a Mayor before s/he has served 2 years. In addition, Jose Luis Paredes' party gained a substantial majority on the council in the local elections of 1999. All of these developments should provide much-needed stability for El Alto. Furthermore, Paredes' own political ambitions also require him to do a good job in and for El Alto, and early signs were that he was reasserting municipal control over *Alteño* development. I discuss his election and the issue of clientelism in the following chapter.

¹⁷ Changing offices, departments, responsibilities and personnel as a result of the election, combined with 'extra-systemic' organisational measures (i.e. bribery), made the whole system very opaque. A further complication within Rosas Pampa was the change-over of presidents, discussed below. There was a period of a good few months when the zone in effect lacked a president, and when the new one really began work, he was preoccupied with the fiesta.

for his party in Rosas Pampa). All sorts of things could go wrong. If my personal experience of getting a student visa is anything to go by, these are probably classic examples of bureaucrats slowing processes down in the hopes of being given money to speed them back up again, and this is the reason the actual system is so difficult to pin down: because there isn't one in any coherent and immediately obvious sense. Hernando de Soto's research team found that small business-people in Peru and elsewhere in the Third World faced a similar situation (1989; 2000).

Furthermore, as the system described above indicates, there is almost no strategic urban planning, as residents have to request works for their zones. This lack of overall vision combines with various 'corrupt' imperatives to produce some fascinating results. The story told me by one of the Salesian priests at the University of Don Bosco, which is about 10 minutes down the road from Rosas Pampa, is illustrative. During the rainy season, vehicles would have to make their way through a huge puddle just outside Don Bosco's campus. It was a severe problem along one of the main roads in the city, and many students came to study at Don Bosco. The priest called it "the *Alcaldía's* lake". Quite clearly, the road, which was paved with cement blocks, had collapsed, and it was apparently the lowest point for some distance, so water collected there. The priests had complained about this to a total of three Mayors, and asked simply that they be allowed to remove the central reservation (ironically called a 'garden area', or 'jardinera', but consisting of scrappy dried grass, litter, scabby dogs and a few 'trees') so that water could disappear down the side streets. However, the various plans that had been designed and approved but not implemented, involved very complicated engineering works costing US\$5 million. This would conveniently allow the *Alcaldía* to employ party people for the complicated construction work, including many professional engineers, designers and architects, all of whom could cream off money should they so desire. Of course nothing happened. The priest attributed this to ineptness and inefficiency, rather than outright corruption, but he was a priest at a very important community centre in El Alto, and it would not serve his personal interests to criticise the *Alcaldía* publicly. However, if he, as a representative of one of the most powerful interests in the country (i.e. the Catholic Church) could not get the *Alcaldía* to fix a problem that was blindingly evident to all who passed by, it is unsurprising that the *Juntas* of Rosas Pampa found it so difficult.

The *Juntas* had to play a very careful party-political game, and their *tramites* were vulnerable right up until the point where the work was actually completed. Rosas Pampa's switch from Condepa to MIR in the local elections (described in chapter 3) probably paid off. Although they did not receive as important an *obra* as the more loyal MIRista zone of Santiago II, by mid-2000 work had begun on the first stage of paving the central avenue. Map 3 shows that there is no obvious strategic benefit to paving this particular stretch of road. But clearly those in the *Alcaldía* had understood the *Junta Vecinal's* need for work that would be visible to most people in the zone, a point to which I shall return later in the chapter. The paving of this part of the street also provided a focal point for the fiesta, and the *Junta* was very concerned that it be completed in time for September 14th. At the time that work was underway, comments about the *Junta Vecinal* were extremely positive, and the fact that the street was paved that year benefited the reputation of the incumbent president. People felt that he had been working hard, in contrast to previous presidents. In fact, most of the running had been done by the previous president, and the process of putting the work out to tender was launched in late 1999, prior to the local elections and the changeover of Presidents of the *Junta*. Around this time, the Condepa administration was probably trying desperately to show its ability to deliver results, as it felt the election slipping from its grasp, but the new MIRista government officials could very well have buried that particular *tramite* had they wanted to, and so the credit for the work fell to the MIR, and the new *Junta* President.

In spite of these complications, the leaders in Rosas Pampa thought that there had been an improvement since the LPP came into force; when I asked an ex-President of the zone if anything had changed with the LPP, he replied "yes things have changed a bit. We didn't see even one *obra* before" ("algo que sí. Nosotros no conocíamos ni una obra antes"). Don Julián, said that "before, there was no benefit at all for the zone", but now "the popular participation [money] has arrived, although not in its entirety" ("antes, no había ningún beneficio para la zona ... [ahora] la participación popular ha llegado, pero no en su totalidad"). He estimated that around 50% of the allocated money had reached its proper destination. This may be because the calculations of LPP money are made on outdated population figures, from the census of 1992. It is probable that, because the population of Rosas Pampa and El Alto has grown substantially since 1992, not enough revenue has been allocated. However, people mostly suspected that municipal officials, councillors, and others, have diverted much of the money into their pockets in some

way or another. Certainly, the LPP allows for only 15% of the money to be spent on administration and wages, and most Bolivian municipalities openly admit their inability to keep their running costs down to that level.¹⁸

There are, however, perceived inequities in the distribution of LPP money, most notably that according to residents of Rosas Pampa, the zone of Ciudad Satelite was getting more *obras* than them. There is no doubt that Ciudad Satelite, which happens to be the most middle-class and professional district of El Alto, had much better infrastructure: paved or at least cobbled roads, squares, play areas for children, and a good market. One afternoon, while watching a football match in the zone, the committee members were complaining about this, and one of them brought it up in a taped interview we did later. They attributed it to the fact that Ciudad Satelite has a lot of *Juntas Vecinales* – each *manzano* (block of houses) had its own committee, they said, whose leaders are often retired people, with time on their hands to go to the *Alcaldía* in order to press for *tramites*. However, as Don Teodoro, the Rosas Pampa president in 2000, complained, the Ciudad Satelite representatives couldn't find the time to go on the marches organised by the Federation of *Juntas Vecinales* to protest about the underdevelopment and marginalisation of El Alto. He was annoyed that they weren't making any effort for the residents of El Alto as a whole, but were gaining disproportionate benefit for their own zone.

What was absent from the complaints was an explanation for the inequity that struck me right from the beginning of my time in El Alto, namely that since Ciudad Satelite is the only mainly *mestizo* (as opposed to *cholo*) district in El Alto, it is probably also where most of the municipal functionaries who don't live in La Paz reside. My initial assumption was that the inequity was due simply to racism and class inequities, on a structural level. I hesitate to proffer explanations for these silences, and for the ways the Rosas Pampa authorities chose to explain the unequal distribution of resources. I offer this example more as yet another structural factor making the *Junta's* objective of the betterment of the zone an extremely difficult one.

The struggle for development for Rosas Pampa illustrates a complex process whereby outside entities, that is municipal government and international NGOs, have a part in

¹⁸ The original projection in the legislation was for only 10% instead of 15%.

constructing the community as a bureaucratic entity, represented by the *Juntas* and dealt with as a consumer of or petitioner for development. This puts the leaders in a difficult position, whereby they are unable to demand what the *vecinos* see as their due. On the other hand, people recognise the importance of the *Junta Vecinal's* leading role in the fights for legal title to land in the past, and more recently, for *obras*.

Leadership, accountability and corruption

While the previous section focussed essentially on the Rosas Pampa-state part of the mediated relationship between individual citizen and the state, this section focuses on the individual-Rosas Pampa relationship. I do this by examining the issue of leadership, and how *vecinos* assert their own expectations of their authorities. My argument here is that community leaders do not always serve the interests of the collectivity. However, their failure to do so does enable the construction of a notion of what those interests might be. Occasionally, the collectivity defines itself against, or despite, the actions of its leaders, through accusations of corruption which in turn reinforce a notion of a common good that can be violated through corrupt practices. Here, rumour and gossip are means of constructing public opinion and conducting local politics, and are therefore very important citizenship practices. As well as being a serious problem in local administration, corruption is also one of the ways through which zonal politics is articulated, highlighting the parallels between zone, municipal and national levels of government. The following chapter explores corruption-talk as a discourse through which people represent their relationship to the state, but many similar issues arose when people talked about public office at zonal level. When people talked about community leaders being corrupt, they meant that they were seeking to use the zone's money to serve their own interests rather than those of Rosas Pampa. Other ways of describing the same thing was calling people *personalistas* or *interesados* (self-serving, or self-interested). Corruption was the most important trope through which rumour and gossip were used to make and resist claims for power or leadership positions, as well as being a way to evaluate community leaders, and articulate values about the use of power. Accusations of corruption are an important element in how the *vecinos* exercise accountability and ensure that their leaders are working for the benefit of the zone. Exercising leadership in this context is a very delicate proposition.

Rumour, gossip and direct accusations of corruption

In Rosas Pampa, corruption was used via rumour to articulate political allegiances or struggles, and to manoeuvre for positions of power; as well as to resist such manoeuvres. Accusations of corruption serve both to highlight the moral integrity of the accuser, as well as to throw some mud (not always undeserved) at the accused. An example of this is the *Junta Escolar*. In 1999, the leadership had been in position for about six years. They were elected because they had been particularly vocal during meetings in questioning where the fines and quotas charged to the parents actually went (the rumours at the time were that parents' quotas were spent on birthday celebrations for the teachers). They were generally reckoned to be very successful leaders, having negotiated with APS to build six classrooms, and toilets for the children during their term of office. However, from about March of 2000, rumours started to build that they had begun to steal building materials, and money. A shop-owner told me that she had heard that adobe bricks were being taken from the school, for example.

People were asking when the leaders would "give in their accounts" ("rendir cuentas bien"). I was told by some that the rumours happened when they did because a particular group of people were "running around" in order to take over the leadership of the *Junta Escolar*. This was not unusual: Don Roberto said that people always complained when the time for voting new leaders was approaching, but never actually proposed alternatives, so the same ones remained in position. Doña Gregoria, one of the incumbent leaders of the *Junta Escolar* who was being accused of corruption, and those on her side, accused the rumour-mongers of wanting to become leaders simply in order to "extract money" ("sacar dinero"). She said that it was people from *barranco*, that is the edge of the zone, who wanted to become leaders. However, they have mostly built their houses illegally, according to her, and don't hold proper title to their land, which means that they could simply run off with any money they collected. Don Roberto confirmed that it was people from the *barranco*, who were disgruntled, telling me that they had approached him to be involved as a future leader. He felt that "it's all self-interest now, they just see money" ("todo es interés ahora, ven dinero nomás"). Even his position as catechist is subject to rumours, with people claiming that he is making money from the collection plate.

Even when there weren't upcoming elections, there were constant rumours about community leaders being corrupt. For example, it was commonly known (or thought, at any rate) that most of the leaders of the *Junta Vecinal*, in common with previous committees, had houses or land in other zones, particularly Senkata. Senkata is a district a bit further out of El Alto along the road to Oruro. Land there is available and cheap, and the belief was that successive *Junta Vecinal* committee members have used their positions to accumulate enough money (or building materials) to buy a plot there and build a bigger house than their property in Rosas Pampa. Even in taped interviews, women made comments about the *Junta Vecinal's* tendency to "sacar dinero":

"I would say that the Junta should – well there are times when they say 'give us a bit of time [to show how they have spent the money]', really, but frankly they can't say that any more; people say that they help themselves [to money] anyway. People have helped them [with money, quotas], but they've just redirected it to their houses. Yes, they even buy houses for themselves, and with the money make everything nice, that's what people say. ... People say that they really just take advantage ... The authorities change, but they all do the same. A new one comes in, and away he goes with the money."

("Yo diría de la Junta, deben – hay veces, si pues, 'un ratito ya' dicen, pues, pero ya no es eso; dicen que ellos ya se sacan. Les han ayudado [con dinero, cuotas], entonces ellos nomás a sus casas se lo hacen llegar. Si ellos nomás hasta casas se compran, con eso se hacen arreglar, dice. ... Ellos nomás dice que se aprovechan. ... Otro cambia, lo mismo se hace. Otro cambia, con la plata se va.")

"Every single president has to take advantage, really."

("Cada presidente que entra siempre tiene que 'provechar, ps.'"¹⁹)

This particular woman thought that, although you can see the *obras* of the *Junta Escolar*, even with them, "there's always some for their pockets. ... They never use up all the money they collect, they're always fining people" ("siempre para su bolsillo hay. ... Nunca cabalito dan"²⁰, no hay eso, siempre están sacando multas").

The *Junta Vecinal* probably had more opportunities for corruption than the *Junta Escolar*. There were many stories, alleging diversion of the money raised from quotas collected for the installation of almost all of the public services. The installation of the sewage

¹⁹ As both these quotes show, 'aprovechar' is a common verb in *altiplano* Bolivia. It means to take advantage of, or exploit, an opportunity or situation. Although it is not always a negative thing to do, it is ambivalent.

²⁰ The phrase 'dar cabalito' refers to market vendors selling a full measure of produce.

system was particularly notorious. A previous president, Don Pablo, had, according to a number of my friends, charged quotas around twice the price of the actual cost, and there were serious doubts about the destination of the extra funds. Don Rolando, the president during 1999, had apparently charged quotas of 10Bs (US\$1.70) per house for work paving the three main streets of the zone. But he said that someone had entered his house and stolen it. Doña Gregoria thought that Don Rolando was particularly *personalista*. She said that when the *Junta Escolar* had obtained funds for the school toilets, he had demanded to be the builder in charge of their construction, since he was also the President of the zone at the time. However, later on they had discovered that stones and cement had gone missing. For that reason, she prevented him from working on the classrooms they built in 1999, even though he had again asked to be involved.

These stories show a struggle between the perception that personal material gains are the most important motivation for leaders (a 'politics of the belly' (Bayart 1993)) and a strong conception of communality. Leaders are supposed to work for the benefit of the community rather than for personal interest, a distinction which broadly maps onto the public/private distinction made in Western definitions of corruption (Haller 2002).²¹ It was evident that people had a sense of what public service was: for example, Doña Gregoria felt that people (other than, of course, herself) were no longer doing things for the zone. She connected this individualism to Bolivia's underdevelopment, claiming that if people were honest and worked for the benefit of the zone then Bolivia would progress more. There was a general consensus that *Junta Vecinal* and *Junta Escolar* leaders had stood for election because they wanted to work for Rosas Pampa. In one General Assembly, the President of the *Junta Escolar* said of the *Junta Vecinal*, "a leader has become a leader in order to work for the good of the zone" ("un dirigente ha entrado para trabajar pa' el bien de la zona"), and the "good of the zone" was a frequent theme in conversations, meetings and interviews. Leadership positions were elected, by the general assemblies of the *vecinos* and the school parents. Leaders stand for elections, but generally say that they were asked to do so, for one reason or another. They give the impression that they were (reluctant) servants of the community.

²¹ Sneath (2002) points out that we cannot assume an unproblematic mapping of public/private in the same way in all societies, but that local versions might be identifiable.

Many had had previous experience as political leaders, for example in trades unions or Mothers' Clubs. It may be that people with prior experience of organising will be more politicised or more confident, and more ready to take on leadership positions in the community. Alternatively, the kinds of people who come to the fore in work- or gender-based organisations may be those who are also, due to personal characteristics, those likely to have a high profile in the zone. The main qualification for becoming a leader seems to be this high profile. This could be through involvement in work for the benefit of the zone. For example, Don Pablo had previously been one of the labourers on a number of zonal projects. Eventually, he said, he just stood against someone else in an election for President, and won. Speaking out in the general assemblies, of both the *Junta Vecinal* and the *Junta Escolar*, is also a means by which one raises one's profile, as the present leaders of the *Junta Escolar* had done. Since they had been vocal critics of the previous administration, they were asked if they could do a better job.

A further qualification is long residence in the zone: Don Ronaldo, the newly instituted Secretary of Sports and Young People in the *Junta Vecinal* said:

"They gave me the position of Sports Secretary because I, well, I've lived in this zone it must be since about '76. I'm really one of the first *vecinos* and since I get on pretty well with the young people, for that reason they gave me this position, of Secretary of Sports and Young People."

("Me han dado el cargo de Secretario de Deportes como yo casi vivo en esta zona, mas o menos debe ser desde el '76. Soy casi uno de los primeros vecinos y como casi mucho yo me llevo bien con los jóvenes y por eso me han dado ese puesto de Secretario de Deportes y Juventudes.")

When asked if he could have refused the job, he said not really:

"Also, people know you. They know that you're on the side of the young people. I don't think that you can [refuse – unclear on tape] because when someone speaks, I think that also if you're going to talk you have to respond by working too."

("La gente también te conoce. Saben que vos estas con los jóvenes. No creo que hay que [rehusar] porque cuando uno habla, yo creo que también como hablas tienes que responder trabajando.")

So he felt that he could not refuse, partly because, like the leaders of the *Junta Escolar*, he had been criticising the previous leaders, implying that he could do better.

Furthermore, his comments hint at another reason for qualifying as leader, which is simply that if you are apt for the job, at some point, after long enough residence, it becomes your turn. This is very similar to what happens in the countryside, where

leadership positions rotate between households (Carter and Mamani P 1989; Klemola 1997; Abercrombie 1998).

People do not get involved in zonal business if they are not in some way willing to become leaders when they are needed or it is their turn. And long residence is not always a necessity. For example, Don Julián explained his move into leadership thus:

“I came to live [in the zone] in '86, so I got to know various *vecinos*; and that's the reason that I always helped with written things, such as legal memos, letters, all that sort of thing. They know that I was studying [law] at the University. And that's the reason they made me Secretary. I've now been in that position for about 8 years.”

(“86 he venido a vivir [en la zona], entonces me he conocido con varios vecinos; y eso es la razón de que yo siempre cooperaba con los escritos, en los memoriales, cartas, toda esa situación. Saben que yo estaba estudiando [derecho] en la Universidad. Y eso es la razón que me han llevado a Secretario de Actas. Ya estoy aproximadamente 8 años con esta cartera.”)

Although not a long term resident, the important thing was that Don Julián was *conocido* and had got to know other *vecinos*. He had also helped the previous leaders out with formal correspondence. Furthermore, his particular qualification as law student meant that professionally he had much to give the zone, and that he would therefore be a particularly good Secretary. In mid-2000, he finally qualified as a lawyer, probably the only one in Rosas Pampa, so he is a very important asset for the zone. The treasurer who took up post in mid-2000 was a teacher, showing that professional qualifications of whatever kind are highly valued. It is common for Andean communities to choose leaders who show ability to mediate with the *mestizo* world (Altamirano 1984), and a professional qualification underlines that. It can also be interpreted as evidence of ability and honesty that will be beneficial to the zone.

Andean ethnographies tend to view community leadership in the *campo* as an obligation that is usually very expensive: prestige and duty prevail over material interest (Carter and Mamani P 1989; Klemola 1997; Abercrombie 1998). The committee members of Rosas Pampa themselves were often vocal about the fact that they were spending their own money on all the work they did. Don Julián pointed out that

“It's hard work being a leader, because really the *Junta de Vecinos* doesn't have money, or resources for fares or even for food, when we go to the *Alcaldía*. We don't even get our monthly quotas, because since the zone now has everything, people are not interested in going to meetings, and no longer give their monthly 1 Boliviano. Since we're 800 [households], really there should be 800

[Bolivianos] monthly for the leaders to use. But there isn't, we just about raise 20 or 30 Bolivianos, so we leaders use our own money."

("Trabajo es ser dirigente, porque tampoco la Junta de Vecinos tiene dinero, recursos para los pasajes, para la comida inclusive cuando se va a la Alcaldía. No tenemos ni cuotas mensuales, como que la zona ya tiene todo, entonces ya no interesa la gente ir a las reuniones, y ya no aportan sus 1 Boliviano mensualmente. Como somos 800 [casas], entonces 800 debía haber mensualmente por los dirigentes. Pero no hay, apenas 20, 30 Bolivianos, entonces los dirigentes caminamos por nuestra cuenta.")

However, in practice, people are understanding up to a point, accepting that nobody works for nothing. Leadership of a community is hard work, an obligation but also a job, and one doesn't work entirely for free, particularly in the context of a serious economic recession. People are prepared to recognise that leaders of the *Junta Escolar* or *Junta Vecinal* should be recompensed in part, at least for their fares and lunches, when they have to go to the *Alcaldía* to ask for things on behalf of the zone. Rather pointedly, one woman said to me "They don't get paid anything either. Who's going to work for free? They get hungry" ("Tampoco no les pagan nada. ¿Quién va a caminar gratis? Tienen hambre, pues"). For her, voluntary work did not make sense. So, for example, Doña Gregoria got a salary for the construction work she did as a representative of the *Junta Escolar* for the new classrooms. Also, when I began work as a substitute teacher, many people said that I should ask to be paid for what I did. When I attempted (unsuccessfully) to volunteer at the school, there was considerable suspicion about the fact that I did not want payment. The English teacher thought that I actually wanted her job. Antero Klemola (1997) provides a contrasting picture for the rural community of Kila Kila, where accusations that leaders were being paid for their work were tantamount to corruption allegations, in that payment indicated that a leader was working for personal interest rather than the communal good.

Payment for community activity is an ambiguous issue in Rosas Pampa as well as in the *campo*. These ambiguities mean that the leaders tread a fine line between being fairly recompensed for their work and spending the zone's money on themselves. Doña Gregoria told me of friction between herself and another leader of the *Junta Escolar*. There were rumours that he had taken a typewriter that had been donated to the school, and that he had been selling parents' attendance cards for more than they were worth. She, of course, considered herself to be completely honest, and felt that his actions might reflect on her: she thought that they should be very careful to be above accusations. On other occasions, though, she told me of things that could have become

grist to the rumour-mongers' mill. Buying things for the school, which requires a lot of walking, is very tiring, and the leaders of the *Junta Escolar* work hard ("mucho sacrificio", a lot of sacrifice) so on one occasion the Headmaster offered her a blanket or some money as payment – at least to cover her expenses.

Don Pablo, the president in charge of the sewage system, maintained to me that he had been working very hard for the benefit of the zone in ways that were not necessarily visible to ordinary residents, since he had supervised all the *tramites* to get the legal status that enabled the zone to access LPP money. He felt that the criticisms easily made a leader become discouraged, that people only notice the president when he is failing a little bit, not when he is actually working. He said:

"Sometimes, being a leader, we want things for the good of the zone, but it doesn't turn out like that. Sometimes the opposite happens... . But the *vecinos* ... think that we are trying to steal, get a little bit for ourselves. ... Life's like that, isn't it? They've criticised me too, they went to the press, to the radios, they criticised me, you know."

("A veces, ser dirigente, queremos uno par' el bien de la zona, pero no es así. A veces sale al contrario Pero los vecinos ... piensan que estamos intentando queriendo robar, así algo para nosotros. ... Toda la vida es ese, no? Yo inclusive me han criticado, iban a la prensa, radios, me han criticado, no?")

However, as of September 2000, nearly two years after his term had finished, he had not provided the accounts for his presidency, and did not seem likely to.

And the corruption stories have as much to do with highlighting the moral integrity of the teller as anything else. Because everyone is involved – I was even told how some priests had offered previous leaders of the *Junta Escolar* US\$3 000 individually to turn the school over to the Catholic Church.²² But no-one is involved – the person who told me this was doing so in order to show their moral integrity in turning down the offer: saying if they were bad people they would have taken the money; and, he went on, they probably should have, since the school would now "shine", and anyway, people don't appreciate the sacrifices made by the *Junta Escolar* for the benefit of the school. For leaders, operating in such a context is difficult, since trust is not straightforwardly conferred upon them, it is conditional. At the same time, it often appears whimsical, since if leaders do succumb to the temptations of corruption and upset that balance

²² I have no way of verifying if the incident happened, or if the amount I was told was correct or an exaggeration. The point, more, is the nature of the corruption narrative itself (Gupta 1995).

between working for the zone and gaining personal recompense, there is a fair degree of acceptance, as Don Rolando's case shows.

Corruption, accountability and obras

By March 2000, the residents of the zone had had enough of the President, Don Rolando. At a General Assembly, he and his Vice-President were forced to resign, and were replaced by other members of the leadership committee. I had been unable to go because I was ill, but I asked Doña Betty about it later while buying provisions from her shop. She called over Don Arturo to explain it to us. It was a case of embezzlement ("malversación de fondos"): Don Rolando had "misspent" ("malgastado") US\$2 000 from the money set aside for the Community Centre. Doña Betty had heard that the figure was \$25 000, and that he had bought a piece of land in the *Alteño* zone of Atipirís with the proceeds, and taken building materials from the Community Centre in order to build a house there. According to Don Arturo, Don Rolando had actually spent the money on a mistress in Santa Rosa. He was apparently still living in Rosas Pampa, but had rather gone to ground. Doña Betty said that she thought he should show his face, to say if he had stolen the money or not. She thought he was a coward, and not a real man. Both she and Don Arturo agreed that it was all right for him to spend his own money on a lover, but one shouldn't "play with the zone's money". Earlier in the year, he had been so stressed at creditors and builders coming and asking him for the money he no longer had, that he had actually poisoned himself, and been taken to hospital. As Doña Betty put it later in an interview, "He squandered the money, then he poisoned himself, it came out in the paper, everything, it was all over the press. It's a real disgrace." ("Ha malgastado la plata, después se había envenenado, ha salido en periódico, todo, estaba en la prensa. Es una barbaridad.").

Don Roberto later told me that the Community Centre money had come from various non-governmental institutions, and the money that had been 'misspent' was from that allocated to the provision of furniture. He said that the same sort of thing had happened in many administrations. None of the *Juntas Vecinales* have given account of what they spent, each administration has to start from scratch, as no-one keeps any documents. He had, he said, been arguing strongly for some sort of community archive, which would hold documents from previous *Juntas*, and allow for knowledge to be passed down. He thought that Don Rolando had a weak character, even though he knew a lot, whereas the other leaders were stronger in character but lacked knowledge.

My neighbour, Doña Emiliana, said that she thought that leaders “shouldn’t do these things” (“no deben hacer esas cosas”) and while perhaps a woman would poison herself, a man shouldn’t. Regarding community authorities in general, she said that “We can’t say anything, they won’t listen to us. It’s the same in [my *pueblo*], they defraud just the same, it’s their job” (“no podemos decir nada, no nos van a hacer caso. Igual es en [mi *pueblo*], igual engañan, es su trabajo.”) I asked why do they do it? She said “I ask myself the same thing. Perhaps because there’s no money around.” (“eso mismo digo yo. Tal vez porque no hay plata.”) Don Ronaldo, the Sports Secretary was also fairly sympathetic:

“It’s really bad, isn’t it? I mean, I think he was in a really critical moment, in a moment – I think that you only do that sort of thing when you are desperate. When there’s no way out, and to do, to get to that extreme, I think he must have been really desperate to do that, really, to sell his reputation. Because a lot of people more or less thought he was very able, they believed in him, but since he’s done this, no they think he must have been really desperate, he must have had debts, to get to the point where he sold his prestige, really just threw away his good name.”

(“Da mucha bronca, no? Es decir, yo creo que estaba en un momento bien crítico, no, en un momento – ya, yo creo que solo uno puede hacer algo así cuando uno está desesperado, no? No tiene una salida, y a hacer, a llegar hasta este extremo, yo creo que ha debido estar bien desesperado para hacer eso, no, para vender su prestigio. Porque mucha gente más o menos pensaban en su capacidad, creían en su capacidad, pero como que ha hecho, no, se piensan que ha debido estar realmente desesperado, ha debido tener deudas, hasta vender su prestigio, todo su persona echarlo al tacho realmente.”)

People disapproved of Don Rolando’s actions, but I did not detect any anger: they were fairly unsurprised and resigned to it being the way things are. I suspect that was because by the time the story got out the processes of accountability had failed, and everyone knew that the money had been spent and was unrecoverable. Doña Gregoria said to me that as Treasurer of the *Junta Escolar*, she was very keen to keep good records and be careful with the money, because “people talk”. In this sense, accountability is about prevention, with the sanction of people talking. The stories act as examples and serve to keep other leaders in check. As the Sports Secretary put it, as a leader, one does not want to lose one’s status, prestige. It is tempting to suggest that this sanction is no longer effective in an urban context, where people can simply move to another zone as Don Rolando did – to his house in Senkata. However, he had certainly suffered: losing his prestige, his status, even his masculinity, in the eyes of residents of Rosas Pampa. He could not show his face in the zone. One wonders what his wife felt about all this.

People will always talk about their leaders though, even if they are as clean as a whistle (cf. Parry 2000). As a leader the only way to avoid excessive criticism and overt accusations of corruption is through obtaining *obras* for the zone or the school. From the residents' point of view, the achievement of *obras* was both necessary for the zone and evidence that the Junta was making an effort and achieving results (“trabajando bien”, working well or “caminando bien”, lit. walking well). The leaders were well aware of this. At a meeting towards the end of October 1999, they were discussing an appropriate time to hold the next General Assembly. They decided that it was a good idea to have a meeting soon, since they had the newspaper advertisement for the tendering of the contract to pave Avenue 4, and had nearly finalised the contract for building the Community Centre. They decided that they should wait until the latter had been finalised, so that they could present the two things as concrete achievements, and thus forestall criticisms from the residents.

The *Junta Escolar* were under similar pressure to produce *obras*, but had had more success than the 1999 *Junta Vecinal*. When asked their opinion about the *Junta Escolar*, many of the women I interviewed made comments about how the school had progressed, how ugly and small it was before, when children had to have classes outside in the playground.

“They’ve worked, the school’s pretty now.”

(“Han trabajado, bonito está el colegio.”)

“Yes, with them things have gone well. They mobilise themselves, they mobilise for milk, for the children. They mobilise in order to improve the school.”

(“Más bien con ellos han caminado bien las cosas. Ellos se movilizan, se movilizan por la leche, pa’ los niños. Se movilizan para mejorar el colegio.”)

“Yes, **they** [as opposed to the *Junta Vecinal*] have worked hard.”

(“Ellos sí han trabajado.”)

“You can see the *obras*.”

(“Se nota las obras.”)

The women I interviewed were well aware that my landlady was one of the *Junta Escolar* leaders, so they were probably not as critical as they could have been. However, the general consensus did seem to be that they had done a good job, or that they were OK – “bien nomás”. I heard criticisms, from closer friends, that they had been in their

posts for too long, and should give someone else an opportunity. There were also rumours about corruption, as I have already described earlier in the chapter.

Overall, though, the assessment of the *Junta Escolar* was more favourable than that of the *Junta Vecinal*, because they had quite clearly improved the school. You could see where they were spending the money they charged in quotas and fines. The problem was that with the *Junta Vecinal* results were not so obvious. So the women made comments such as the following:

“Up until now, you can’t see anything.”

(“Hasta ahorita no se ve nada.”)

“[The leaders] have forgotten about the zone. They’ve totally forgotten. Now, recently, there seems to me to be a little bit of interest in the zone. ... But they’ve never had any interest in the zone.” When I asked what good things have the Junta done, she replied “No, they haven’t done anything, there aren’t any *obras*.”

(“[Los dirigentes] se han olvidado de la zona. Se han olvidado totalmente. Ahora recién me parece que hay un poco de interés en la zona. ... Nunca han tenido interés de la zona.” “No, no han hecho nada, no hay obras.”)

“They haven’t moved themselves. ... For example, this avenue [Av. 4], they had to do that last year. It seems as though the authorities are there more for money than anything else. They don’t move themselves, they don’t mobilise for the zone. Because if the authorities, if the President of the zone, had actually mobilised themselves, I think the zone would have progressed much better. But they don’t care, that’s why it’s like it is.”

(“No se mueven. ... Por ejemplo esta avenida [av. 4] tenían que hacerlo ya el año pasado. Entonces parece que las autoridades están más por dinero y por nada más. No se mueve, no se movilizan por la zona. Porque si las autoridades, por decirle, el presidente de la zona se movilizaría yo creo que estaría todo adelantado. Pero a ellos no les importa, por eso está.”)

People weren’t universally critical: one woman pointed out that “it’s difficult to be a leader is difficult” (“ser dirigente es difícil”), and that people don’t understand, they “talk behind their backs” (“hablan por atrás”), and don’t realise how much work the leaders put in and how much it costs. Others said that they were OK, that they had provided the zone with a sewage system, water, electricity – some leaders are good, some bad. One pointed out that they were making an effort, in conjunction with the market women’s leaders, to get the market improved, and make it more hygienic.

Obras constitute the acknowledged legitimate expectations of the citizens, whether they be citizens Rosas Pampa or of El Alto, as the following chapter outlines. One result of this in Rosas Pampa was a series of highly ritualised inauguration ceremonies for the

obras that had been completed during the year I lived there. The Junta Vecinal ceremoniously poured alcoholic libations for new Community Centre, with the relevant NGO people, from APS and the local Health Centre. The same NGO people came to the ceremonial opening of the four new classrooms at the school. Both ceremonies consisted of long speeches, and poetry readings and dances from school children, followed by an official *ch'alla*²³ and toast of 'champagne' (cider) and biscuits, followed by food and, if those present were lucky, beer. The grandest ceremony was when Jose Luis Paredes came to open the newly paved Avenue 4, on the morning of the first day of the fiesta, and supervised the civic parade of the school children that traditionally opens the festivities. Such rituals of accountability marked the triumphs of the authorities, in a far more powerful and important way than rendering well-kept financial accounts could ever do. The *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa have various ways of asserting their expectations of their leaders, and controlling their actions, particularly through accusations of corruption. Corruption is both the means by which citizens stake their claim to these *obras*, and the context which makes such concrete evidence of activity essential.

Conclusions

This chapter has described some of the practices by which the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa constitute themselves as collective citizens, a collectiveness that was recently recognised by the Bolivian state in its provisions for local government. It has shown that the *vecinos'* sense of collectivity involves a strong conception of active responsibility towards the community, which varies according to the person but is most acute for the leaders. However, nearly everybody has participated in some way in the development of the zone, and most people are well aware of zonal politics, through informal networks as well as formal structures. The *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa have constructed their zone over the last thirty or so years on their own initiative and by appealing to the state and to NGOs for the provision of services and infrastructure.

²³ A *ch'alla* is a libation, and the way you open a building, for example – you drop some alcohol onto the floor, to feed the Pachamama, and for good luck. Chapter 5 discusses *ch'allas* in more detail. The president who had 'misspent' the money intended for its furnishing was present at this particular ceremony. Nobody commented on his presence or on the issue of misspent funds.

One consequence of that history is the emphasis on results, *obras* instead of accurate accounts as a means of measuring the success or failure of local politics. Politics coalesces around concrete local issues, and if the Juntas do not provide *obras*, then they have failed in the eyes of the *vecinos*. The corruption talk of the second half of this chapter is a way of explaining the failure to secure *obras*, either because the Juntas or the local government are deemed corrupt. In turn, the demand for *obras* is a means of reducing the damage done by corruption, because, at the very least, some money has been invested in the community. Corruption talk is also an interesting example of the practices by which women redress the gender imbalance of the public face of community politics. Where much of local politics is conducted through rumour and gossip, female networks are crucial to the forming of public opinion. Finally, it also expresses and imposes the *vecinos'* expectations of their leaders, holding future leaders to account pre-emptively with the threat that they will be discussed in the same demeaning way as Don Rolando was if they succumb to the temptation to divert the zone's money for their personal interests. Future leaders know that in order to be successful they should hold to their commitment to be active in favour of the zone. Thus, corruption talk creates an understanding of the public and the zone as well as drawing on that understanding.

To sum up, this chapter has shown how the constitution of the zone as a collective political subject is dependent upon internal and external dynamics. Internally, discussions about corruption and community leadership enable *vecinos* to imagine themselves as a single political entity. That collectivity, however, is riven with suspicions and tensions, as the *vecinos* attempt to counteract the apparent self-interest of the leaders. In addition, the zone must interact as a zone with external forces such as the state and, in the state's absence, the NGOs. The community authorities mediate the problematic relationship between individual citizen and the state, but they are not always uncontested representatives of the community. The ethnography of this chapter has shown that the model of citizenship operating in contemporary Rosas Pampa is neither a Liberal individual one of an unmediated citizen-state relationship nor the communitarian version where community is unquestioned by its members.

CHAPTER 3

CITIZENS DESPITE THE STATE

At election time, the relationship between individual citizen and the state becomes in theory much more direct and individualised than the day-to-day administration described in the previous chapter. However, an investigation of the 1999 local elections in El Alto shows a mix of individual and collective interests and strategies at work. In this chapter, I investigate the operations of the political system in El Alto, examining the theme of democracy from the point of view of the voters/citizens themselves. Voting is the archetypal citizenship practice and expression of political agency within Liberal democracies, both duty and right of citizens. Universal suffrage (associated with the Revolution of 1952 in Bolivia) is central to 20th Century Liberal rhetoric about a universal and equal category of citizenship. That universalism is undermined in practice through the operation of clientelism and personalist politics. Paradoxically, this both exacerbates the distance between electorate and elected and brings them closer together, at least during the time of the election campaign. In this chapter, I shall argue that both these effects create different collective political subjects: for the former, a collective sense of 'the people' against, or despite, the politicians, and in the latter, the patron-client grouping.

The smooth operation of a representative democracy implies the depersonalisation of both the elector and elected, as we become abstracted individuals making rational choices. Yet the people of Rosas Pampa destabilize both the abstraction and the individuation, principally through the logic of the patron-client relationship. Clientelism is used by the clients to assert an engagement with the state in the person of the politician, and a greater representativity of politics, as they develop personalised relationships with him or her. Although individuals seek to establish themselves as clients of the political parties for personal reasons, this co-exists with a desire to gain collective benefit from the patrons, and constitute the zone itself as a client. Clientelism here appears as a means by which the clients seek to overcome the depersonalisation of electoral politics to create a more direct and less delegative local democracy.

Meanwhile, a pervasive disillusionment with politics expresses itself in narratives of politicians' corruption, which articulate the powerlessness people feel with regard to

political (and economic) elites. Through narratives of politicians' corruption, the people of Rosas Pampa assert their expectations of the state and attempt to hold politicians to account, thus representing the nature of the state and the reality of their citizenship back to themselves. This has the effect of distancing them from the state and the political elites, and is an expression of the lack of representativity in the political system¹, but it also constitutes Rosas Pampa and the 'people of Bolivia' as collective entities – citizens betrayed by venal politicians. Despite this, the operation of the actual election is taken very seriously in Rosas Pampa, and the *vecinos* act as a zone and assert a collective pride in their right to vote and to do so meticulously. The election is also therefore a part of the process of constituting the sense of community in Rosas Pampa.

The political scene in El Alto

In the December 1999 local elections in El Alto, the stakes were high. The *Alcaldía* had been run by the same political party for the previous decade: *Conciencia de Patria*, or Condepa. The Condepa administrations were notoriously corrupt and inefficient, and the party had fragmented since the death of its founder in 1997 and its subsequent electoral success and entry into national government as a coalition partner. In 1999, the situation looked ripe for an upset in their final stronghold, El Alto. Sure enough, the *Movimiento Izquierdista Revolucionario* (Leftist Revolutionary Movement, or MIR) put an end to Condepa's reign. Their candidate, Jose Luis Paredes, also called Pepelucho, gained around 45% of the overall vote, and the MIR won an unprecedented 7 out of the 11 council places on offer. Rosas Pampa too had been Condepista for the previous ten years, and similarly switched to the MIR in 1999, the result mirroring the overall vote for El Alto.

Condepa was founded by Carlos Palenque, who rose to prominence in the 1960s as a charango player², a "*folklorista*". His move to more obviously political spheres began in 1980, when he started a radio show, called *La Tribuna Libre del Pueblo* (The Free Tribunal of the People). This continues today, and its format is that ordinary people come to the microphone to appeal for help, publicise events, denounce a crime, etc. In 1985 he bought a TV station, enabling him to broadcast the *Tribuna* on TV as well as on the radio. In 1988 the TV and radio stations were closed down temporarily by the

¹ A key problem for Bolivian party politics. See Gamarra & Malloy (1995), Romero Ballivian (1996), Dunkerley (1998), Domingo (2001), and Gamarra (2002).

² A charango is a small mandolin, used in classic Bolivian folkloric music.

government, and he and fellow workers at the channel, including his pregnant wife, famously went on hunger strike to protest. It was soon after this that he founded Condepa and they ran in the municipal elections of 1989, coming first in the department of La Paz, much to the surprise of the Bolivian political classes (Archondo 1991; Saravia and Sandoval 1991). In 1997 Palenque died of a heart attack just before the presidential elections, leaving a political and communications empire to be squabbled over by his daughter, Veronica Palenque, his fellow TV presenter and rumoured mistress, Remedios Loza, and his recently estranged widow.³ Condepa were part of the national governing coalition from 1997 until late 1998, when the party split and left the coalition. Remedios' faction moved into opposition, while Veronica's 'rebels', although not part of the coalition, continued to vote for the government. Palenque's death, however, proved impossible to overcome. The 1999 municipal elections were the moment where Condepa lost its last remaining stronghold, El Alto, even though the much-loved Remedios was candidate for mayor. Her candidacy was a last-ditch attempt to rescue the party from division, escalating corruption scandals, and the gaping symbolic hole left by Palenque's death. In the 1997 presidential elections Remedios herself had filled this, as an indigenous woman and Palenque's most faithful ally, but by 1999, this no longer cut much ice. She was tainted by rumours about her style of leadership, as well as the phenomenal corruption of Condepista administrations in the previous decade in El Alto and La Paz. By the 2002 presidential elections Condepa's support, even in the department of La Paz, had dwindled to almost nothing.

The MIR's campaign, culminating in November-December 1999, is one of the more recent examples of a trend of local-level populism in Bolivia that began in the mid-late 1980s with Condepa (Archondo 1991; Mayorga 1991; Blanco Cazas and Sandoval 1993). As with other Latin American populist movements, Condepa and MIR appealed at both pragmatic and affective levels. In the mid-20th Century, Latin American populism's pragmatic appeal for voters tended to rest upon its association with redistributive economic policies, the archetypal populist movement being Peronism in Argentina.⁴ For most populist movements, economic redistribution was organised along clientelistic lines, and the neopopulists of recent years continue to rely heavily on

³ I have discussed Condepa and the intertwining of gender politics and the media elsewhere (Lazar 2002).

⁴ However, 1990s Latin America has shown that populism is also compatible with neoliberalism, the best example being Fujimori in Peru, but also Menem in Argentina and Collor in Brazil. This has been called 'neopopulism' (Crabtree 1998; Weyland 1999).

distribution of patronage (Blanco Cazas and Sandoval 1993; Auyero 2000). In this chapter I shall analyse the attempts of the clients to use this distribution of patronage for their own ends. They seek to do this in part through the development of a personal, direct relationship with the patron, that is, they place great importance on the more affective side of politics.⁵ They actively shape and take advantage of opportunities that arise during election time for bringing the political process closer to home, thus gaining benefit and substantiating their citizenship in practice, albeit temporarily. This contradicts much of the literature on clientelism, which misrepresents the clients as passive, unsophisticated and uninformed – purely subjects of control.⁶ In fact, as many are acutely aware, there is much at stake for the clients: the zone might miscalculate and therefore be forgotten by the *Alcaldía* for the next five years, or it might enjoy the benefits of being known as a zone that voted for the winning party. In addition, whole families' livelihoods depend upon making correct calculations about party allegiance, since their future employment may be linked to party membership.

“Getting people” – the pragmatics of clientelism during the campaign

This section gives a detailed discussion of one aspect of the citizenship practice of voting, that is the calculations that voters make during election campaigns. Through addressing the operation of clientelism from the perspective of the clients, I explore the ways in which clients exercise their political agency according to both individual and collective interests. The general marginalization of the poor from political power is less solid at local government level, and in particular at election time. The system of campaigning tends towards face-to-face interaction with the candidates in the years prior to election, and during the campaign. Javier Auyero (2000) has noted something similar for Buenos Aires, where people talk of the ‘time of elections’ as a palpably different period in the relations between politicians and poor districts. As in El Alto, in the run-up to the elections, residents of poor urban neighbourhoods suddenly find that

⁵ Populism is often characterised by a direct appeal by a leader to the popular sectors, bypassing intermediary organisations such as political parties or interest groups (Dix 1985; Blanco Cazas and Sandoval 1993; Crabtree 1998; Conniff 1999; Weyland 1999). Kurt Weyland calls it a “quasi-direct but hierarchical relationship between a personalist leader and masses of devoted followers” (1999: 172), and this characterises the relationship that developed between Paredes and his voters well.

⁶ See (Schmidt, Scott et al. 1977). Gay (1998) argues that much of the misrepresentation of clients as passive subjects of control, common in the political science of Latin America, derives from the fact that the literature analyses clientelism from a top-down perspective. Recent work is beginning to redress that balance. See for example (Auyero 2000).

they count, that their support is being sought, and that politicians are visiting their zone frequently, in order to court them. This gives at least the impression that politics is for a short while more representative of the poor, politicians more accountable, and consequently, citizenship more meaningful. Robert Gay points out that the vote of a poor person has the same value as that of a rich person, and it is cheaper to buy the votes of the poor than those of the rich (Gay 1998).

For political parties during election campaigns, it is extremely important to “have people” (“tener gente”), since the party with most people is the one that voters expect to win, and are therefore most likely to vote for, in a snowball effect. Before I examine the slow and incremental process of gaining people, in the sense of gaining goodwill, in the years prior to the election, I address the election campaign itself. I look at the more instrumental side of how political parties gain “their people” through clientelism, and how this is viewed by those whose allegiance is sought, as well as at the role of spectacle during the campaign in demonstrating the people you have and gaining more.

Clientelism during the campaign

I went along to a meeting of the MIR women’s group with a 17 year old friend, Victoria, during the final week before the elections. I was the 74th woman to register as a *militante*, or party activist, even though I can’t vote in Bolivia. About 45-50 women attended the meeting at the beginning and around 30 stayed for the whole time. The others left after registering their attendance and collecting plastic mugs that were given out to the women who had attended a campaign event on the previous Sunday. Many then went home, and returned to collect wool that they had been promised as payment for their participation in demonstrations and for having registered as *militantes*. This was a derisory amount, worth 2 Bolivianos (about 20p), and only enough wool for a baby’s hat. It was also only available in orange and blue, the MIR colours. Many of those who were given the rather violent orange wool looked as though they felt distinctly cheated, but they signed for it anyway. During the meeting I asked why the women came, and one said “in order to vote” (“para votar”). I asked if it was necessary to come to a meeting in order to vote, and she said that it was, and “they also give you cups and wool”. Certainly it seemed that the primary motivation among the women was the wool, but many also evidently enjoyed the chance to get together with friends, discuss children and gossip. In general, political parties promise rice, sugar, wool and sometimes toys for children, in return for the work of campaigning. In this they draw

on voters' cultural expectations that have a long history, rooted in the relationships between hacienda owner and peon, and mirroring that between poor women and NGOs (Albro 2000). They often deliver very small amounts, but some women, if they have time, might sign up for as many parties as they can, in order to gain maximum benefit. Victoria herself signed up for two parties, and received more wool from the second. But it is hard work – she had to go to various demonstrations, which took up whole days, during which time she was on her feet with her baby on her back. For that she was given a few Bolivianos worth of wool.

This does not seem adequate payment, and there were many who grumbled quietly, during and after the meeting described above. However, the short-term strategies of taking advantage of small amounts of payment for campaigning work need to be balanced against more long-term considerations. Even if the immediate benefits don't measure up to the amount of work put in, having what is called *aval político*, that is a record of involvement in party activity, can be beneficial in the long term and can lead to employment. The range of jobs that depend upon party allegiance is wide, in all parts of the civil service, public health structures and education, and from construction workers to hospital auxiliaries and school porters. One auxiliary nurse I knew had been fired after 11 years when General Banzer won the national elections in 1997; she had been replaced by a woman who owned a café, and had only had one year's training. Her situation was not atypical. Among the ramifications of such practices are widespread inefficiency in public services, and the lack of trust on the part of the service users.⁷

When new politicians take up post, they fire hundreds of workers in order to make space for their supporters, and generally do not pay the wages for the last three months (or so) of work, let alone redundancy benefits, and the State does not pick up the slack. A salaried municipal civil service job may not bring in much money per month, and wages are often not paid for three or more months, but it is still a job. If you lose that job, as an individual and a family, you need to find new ways for earning money quickly. In Victoria's case, her mother, Doña Josefa, had worked in the municipality for a number of years as a result of her status as a Condepa *militante* with a good record of *aval político*. She knew that Condepa would lose this election, and she would therefore lose her job, so she encouraged Victoria to sign up for other parties, as a way of

spreading her family's forces. Her strategy was for Victoria to get a job from the MIR after the election, thus replacing her mother as the family member earning money from political involvement, and enabling her to financially support the entire family (her mother, brother and baby son, as well as her partner, who was still at school).

The issue of party-related public service jobs impacts in a very real way upon the strategies for economic survival available to many poorer residents of El Alto. It is a gross understatement to say that the insecurity that comes from the political nature of jobs makes life very difficult. However, there is a sense in which the jobs are not simply in the gift of the winning political party, or an effect of corruption, rather that they are part of the citizens' expectations of the state, what Aihwa Ong calls their "citizenship capacity" (Ong 1999)⁸. So, some months after the election, when the new Mayor Jose Luis Paredes had not given as many jobs to MIR *militantes* as was expected, some people felt cheated.⁹ (And, of course, those who feel cheated or betrayed will not vote for the same party again.) They felt that if you put in the work for the party, you should be rewarded – paid – as long as you are able to do the job. At the lower levels of the civil service, there are, as a result of this type of clientelism, high levels of participation in government, meaning that it is almost as though Doña Josefa and Victoria were standing for election themselves. This is an intriguing paradox, given what I have previously said about the distance between the political process and the popular sectors, although the civil service levels to which Victoria might have future access do not hold any actual power.

My second example, on a more collective level, is about the local school. During the run-up to the elections, the school held several political events, at which parties donated materials. One such event was an opening ceremony for two new classrooms funded by an NGO, about three weeks before the elections. After the ceremony, and

⁷ See Terrazas and Dibbits (1994) for an in-depth discussion of *Alteño* women's views on healthcare.

⁸ Ong describes citizenship capacity as follows:

"the ways citizens in different democratic countries seek to realize particular interests, including resources and citizen dignity, and the kind of political accountability they expect from their government. Whereas Western liberal theory may focus on the citizen's capacity to retrieve individual rights . . . , in Asian tiger countries, economic liberalism translates citizenship capacity into the ability to hold the state accountable in terms of the delivery of material and social goods." (1999: 54)

⁹ Most Condepistas were fired from the municipal government when Paredes took over. However, his unwillingness to replace them all was a response to pressure from international donor agencies

with great fanfare, the MNR (*Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario*, National Revolutionary Movement) representative arrived, accompanied by a few local *militantes*, to present much-trumpeted ‘desks’. However, instead of two- or three- child desks, as most had expected, they brought 20 single chairs with a resting place for books on the arms. Despite the obvious disappointment, the parents and children present politely heard the MNR representative’s speech, and eagerly collected the hats, exercise books and almanacs¹⁰ he handed out. The Headmaster spoke, saying rather half-heartedly that we should support the MNR because they were demonstrating their commitment to the zone with deeds.

Later, the ADN (*Acción Democrática Nacional*, National Democratic Action, and the party of President Banzer) asked the leaders of the *Junta Escolar* to organise a convoy of parents to go to a demonstration in another zone, promising more than 20 bags of cement for the school in return. So around 20 mothers went along, to cheer, collect flags, hats, bottles of drink and whatever else they could find. But, as it turned out, “weeping with the effort, they just about gave us five bags of cement” (“*apenas llorando han dado 5 bolsas de cemento*”) as Doña Gregoria said. This had been a serious embarrassment for her, since she had gone to a lot of trouble to get the 20 women out for the ADN, on the promise of cement for the school. Five bags of cement cost some US\$5, and are not enough to be used for anything, while 20 would at least have been useful for some improvement to the school. The mothers who had gone campaigning were not happy.

These two parties’ election strategies had backfired, at least in Rosas Pampa. Doña Gregoria pointed out to me that the ADN’s actions showed how they would behave if in government, as they did not fulfil their promises. Likewise, the MNR had promised desks but brought 20 “little chairs” (“*sillitas*”), no use to a school with class sizes ranging from 35-55. However, on an earlier occasion, the MIR had brought 10 bags of cement; they had also brought a typewriter, provided PA systems for school events and

(Governmental and NGO) to reduce the bureaucracy of the El Alto municipality, in order that it might regain the credit-worthiness lost during Condepa’s administration.

¹⁰ *Almanaques*, posters with calendars on them. The posters proclaimed ‘Goni 2002’ rather than the name of the MNR candidate for mayor, showing that the MNR priority for that election was in fact the candidature of Gonzalo Sanchez de Losada for the presidential elections of 2002. As expected, in the elections the MNR only gained one councillor, and that because they have a substantial following of *militantes* in El Alto. They were never seriously in the running for mayor, and were well aware of this.

basketball hoops for the school (painted in MIR colours). When telling me all the things they had donated, she said “they’re corrupt, but at least they keep their promises” (“son corruptos, pero por lo menos cumplen”). Meanwhile, the *Junta Escolar* and the school authorities had between them at least got three political parties to provide some cement, a few chairs, a typewriter, and other things for the benefit of the school. While politicians are notorious for forgetting poor zones once in power, the campaign period is perhaps the only time the school is noticed, and can play parties off against each other for its own benefit, again giving the lie to the characterisation of clients as passive.

The *Junta Vecinal* tried to implement a similar strategy with the political parties during the election campaign, although with less success, probably because of the overt affiliation of the main leaders with Condepa, who did not have as much money as the MIR.¹¹ At one meeting, the President told how he had been talking with the architect in charge of planning at the municipality, who was also a candidate for an offshoot of Condepa. This candidate expected to come to Rosas Pampa, but wanted people to be there, cheering him on. In return, he was prepared to speed up the approval process for the second phase of the paving of the main Avenue. The President said, in the meeting, that there would be no problem getting residents of the zone to cheer him on, and anyway, “of course, the vote is secret”, meaning that residents could vote for whomever they chose at the actual election. Unfortunately, the candidate did not come to the zone, and ten months later, the second phase of paving had yet to be approved.

Face-to-face politics: the campaign rally

Quite early on, it was clear to most of my informants that the MIR would win the election in El Alto, “because they have a lot of people” (“porque tienen mucha gente”). This generally referred to the people who had signed up as *militantes*, or who had done some work for the party. But simply ‘having’ people is not enough for a party to win, they must **show** that they have people, and get their people or at least people who **look** like they are their people, out on the streets. Public displays are, alongside TV, the main way in which politicians stake their claims to electoral success, and street demonstrations are the best way for voters to assess the chances of particular political

¹¹ Campaign money from the National Electoral Court for Condepa had been withheld because of corruption accusations.

parties.¹² They also appeal to voters' sense of fun, curiosity, and business sense and are a means of demonstrating parties' wealth and generosity.

One Friday, Doña Gregoria's children came to tea brimming over with excitement, because they had heard that Jose Luis Paredes was going to visit the school the following day. They wondered what he would bring: hats, flags, cups? The music teacher was a fanatic MIR *militante*, and had arranged everything: Pepelucho would turn up at 10.30am. I arrived at 10.20, to the strains of thumping pop music. The kids from the graduating class were kicking a football around, the builders working on the school were cementing the outside of the classrooms and the music teacher occasionally appeared, looking important. A loudspeaker announced that we would shortly be receiving a visit from a very important person. The banner outside the school entrance was prepared, along with *awayus*¹³ and teddy bears (see Plate 5). Around an hour later, Bolivian music was put on the loudspeaker, the kids formed a corridor, and the music teacher called everyone, including parents, "because it's for the good of the school". However, despite all the excitement, the gathering broke up with no Pepelucho. The music teacher and his fellow MIR *militante* scuttled around some more, making phone calls on a mobile to Jose Luis Paredes' people, with little success.



Plate 5. Banner prepared for Jose Luis Paredes' visit to Rosas Pampa

¹² There has been a recent revival in scholarly interest in political rituals (Banck, 1998; Lomnitz, 1995; Gledhill, 1994; also see Swartz 1968).

¹³ Woven carrying cloths, used primarily to carry babies.

At midday, the candidate from another political party, the MBL (*Movimiento Bolivia Libre*, Free Bolivia Movement), drove in. Or, more precisely, his *militantes* came in on a bus, and he followed in a car. They drove to the MBL office, a large house on one side of the football field, where a small crowd had collected. Various people spoke, in Spanish and in Aymara, advocating participatory democracy, and stressing the fact that the candidate was from El Alto. They sang songs accompanied by panpipes (which are associated with Aymara music), distributed flags, and drank soft drinks. After the candidate spoke, he drove off. His militants hung around for a bit, chatting, until 1.30.

12.40 and things seemed to be collapsing in the school. Half an hour later, most people had got bored and gone home to eat, as it was clear that Pepelucho was not going to come. There was a sense in which the disappointment resulting from the fact that he had not turned up, along with the effort put in to welcoming him properly, created an atmosphere whereby he became special. I went for lunch, and Doña Gregoria asked me what things the MBL – the party that had actually turned up – had brought.

Unfortunately, this time the answer was nothing, not even a leaflet with any kind of manifesto promises. The MIR office in the zone also had no copies of the *Plan Progreso*, Paredes' much-touted manifesto. One got the sense that politicians can, as one 17 year old said to me “invent policies” (“inventar propuestas”). They can sweep into a zone, promise what they like depending on their audience, and leave.

A week later, Remedios Loza, Condepa's candidate, also passed through the zone, in a gleaming green tractor, presumably one of the *Alcaldía*'s, which somewhat ironically were subjects of several rumours of theft by municipal agents. This was in fact the only big event that Condepa put on in Rosas Pampa during the whole electoral campaign, and was supervised by *Junta Vecinal* leaders, including the president. They were out early in the morning, with a table for people to register as Condepa *militantes*. The pages in that book stayed remarkably clear. Only about an hour late, Remedios came through, with a large garland around her neck, smiling and waving like a queen. Lots of people came out to look at the spectacle, and collect the posters and calendars her people were giving out.¹⁴ Occasionally some would go up to her to put confetti on her head and talk

¹⁴ Some proclaiming 'Remedios 2002', referring to the forthcoming presidential elections. The MNR had also already begun their campaigning for 2002, see footnote no. 10

to her. She spotted me, with my camera, and waved directly at me. I was too shy to go up to her, even though a couple of years previously I had interviewed her for my Masters dissertation. Later, a number of people told me that I should have gone to talk with her, telling me that she's very approachable. Remedios' sweeping visit to Rosas Pampa reflects the reverence accorded to the person of the most popular politicians, symbolically shown through garlands and confetti. Reverence and respect does not mean, though, that the politicians were unapproachable. All the same, Remedios didn't even stop to tell us her proposals, to the chagrin of Doña Gregoria and in a similar way to the other political parties. Perhaps Remedios felt that this is not really the point. People don't vote for particular politicians according to their proposals, since they mostly feel that all of them are empty promises.

In the three weeks prior to the actual elections, the political parties shifted up a gear, and came through the zone of Rosas Pampa every weekend. Even Pepelucho eventually visited. The final city-wide rallies for each political party were attended by hundreds of activists, and onlookers eager to see what was happening, and catch any present that might come their way. The MIR seemed able to convene the most people. They closed their election campaign on one of the two principal roads in El Alto. There was a carnival atmosphere, with people selling popcorn, kebabs, sweets, drinks, everything, and a stage show of pop stars and wrestlers. The main leaders of the MIR showed up, demonstrating the MIR's commitment to winning El Alto, and the fact that they thought it a key constituency for Jaime Paz Zamora's possibilities for the Presidency in 2002. They stressed the need for hope, for progress, for a future for El Alto. Jose Luis Paredes declared that his "obra estrella", or "star *obra*" for El Alto would be the achievement of "credibility" before the citizens of El Alto, international organisations and the media, and that he would turn El Alto from the poverty capital of Bolivia into an industrial and export capital.

The experience of effervescence (Durkheim 1965 [1915]) during such spectacles reinforces feelings of similarity with others and being part of the crowd. They also evoke a feeling of an almost personal connection with the leader, in a way that television does not. Pragmatically, as a voter you can assess how many others are likely to vote with you, and what is the likelihood of your party winning; you can also go along to various campaigns, get free entertainment for the day and possibly also a

baseball cap, flag or soft drink. Thus politics in El Alto have an extremely important sensual side to them. Through shouting slogans, singing songs, listening to passionate speeches, politics becomes oral and aural; it's about gratifying taste when you are given a soft drink during a campaign rally, or biscuits in a *militantes'* meeting; it's about seeing hundreds of people wearing orange and blue baseball caps and waving orange and blue flags (or red, white and black; or pink; or brown¹⁵), and feeling part of that, part of the crowds and the dancing. These expressive and affective dimensions present a dilemma for a public code of sober, rational, representative democracy, since the one thing that big campaign rallies do *not* allow voters to do is assess the merits of different political parties on the basis of their proposals for government, reflecting a weakness of the public sphere, according to Claudio Lomnitz (Lomnitz 1995).¹⁶

I would argue that the rallies are one aspect of politics as the development of a personalised relationship between elector and elected. That may be achieved through actually meeting the candidates, on campaign or in their office, at a distance (mediated by the stage) or close-up. Television and local radio also play an extremely important part, even if they are not quite as direct. It is not the case that an ideological position or a program of government is unimportant to voters in El Alto, but few of the parties will commit to one. Most voters expect them to promise everything, and then not fulfil those promises. In this context, it makes sense to look to other ways of assessing suitability, asking whether this candidate might be more likely than the others to fulfil at least some of his or her promises. Granting support visibly through campaign rallies, or through placing confetti or garlands on the candidate, are also cultural forms for attempting to oblige the politician to return the favour and fulfil their promises, as their reciprocal duty to the electorate.

Before the campaign: preparing the ground

In this and the following sub-section, I continue my analysis of engagement with the state via clientelism, and widen the focus to the years running up to the actual campaign itself. I show that formation of the corporate identity of patron-clients grouping is far from automatic, and requires patient work on the part of the patron, which draws on

¹⁵ ADN, MNR and Condepa respectively. The ADN colours are rather sinister, as one friend said he thought the red was for the blood shed during Banzer's dictatorship. Condepa's brown represents the earth, and is a means by which they claim indigenous identity.

cultural codes known by all. For years, Jose Luis Paredes had been carefully manoeuvring himself into the position of leading contender for Mayor of El Alto. He was backed up by the MIR's party machine, and to a certain extent its money, although he invested much of his personal resources¹⁷ both during the campaign and in gaining favour in the years running up to the election. In the event, the voters were not voting for the MIR, they were voting for him.¹⁸ Despite attacking Condepa's use of symbols¹⁹, he himself very capably used a number of key symbolic threads in his campaign. In particular, he staked a claim to two very important ones, that is, the 'mantles' of two key populist leaders of the 1990s. Paredes made this explicit, saying that he based himself on two examples: "that of Don Carlos Palenque, his sensibility and the way he had of treating people, and that of Don Max Fernández, with his donations of modest public works" ("el de don Carlos Palenque, ésa su sensibilidad y forma de tratar a la gente y el de don Max Fernández, haciendo pequeñas obras."²⁰ I discussed Carlos Palenque at the beginning of this chapter. Although I felt he was patronising in his TV show, many people I knew thought that he had a particularly good rapport with ordinary people.²¹ Max Fernández was a similar figure, although his power base did not derive from the media. Like Palenque, he had risen from humble roots to become a successful businessman, and owner of the national brewery. He used that position to gain political power through donations of beer and *obras*, founding a political party, the UCS, in the late 1980s. After his death in a plane crash in 1996, the leadership of the party passed uneventfully to his son, Jhonny (*sic*).²²

The deaths of both Palenque and Fernández provoked large-scale and extreme manifestations of grief. The site of the plane crash that killed Max Fernández became an instant shrine. People came from all over the country to offer flowers and alcohol,

¹⁶ Lomnitz argues that "at any given local level, the relationship between public discussion and ritual is negative: ritual substitutes for discussion and vice-versa" (Lomnitz 1995: 21).

¹⁷ He estimated US\$30 000 of his own money, generated from his business interests, especially the TV Channel 24. Pulso 19-25 Nov 1999, pp. 12-13.

¹⁸ This personalistic politics is common elsewhere in Latin America (Banck 1998; Conniff 1999; Weyland 1999).

¹⁹ Calling it an attachment to "this sociological phenomenon of symbolism" Pulso, *op.cit.*

²⁰ Pulso, *op.cit.*

²¹ See Lazar (2002) for discussion of this.

²² It seems that at first this was a business strategy, whereby he would donate *obras* in order to protect and expand his market, or regain territory lost to competitors undercutting his prices (Mayorga 1991). Although the UCS' main power base was not in La Paz so much as Cochabamba among truck drivers, and Santa Cruz, Fernández funded *obras* all over the country, often allied to the interests of his constituencies. For example, his money paid for the surfacing of one of the roads from El Alto down to La Paz.

and pray for help. Newspapers reported scenes of multitudes of crying people at Palenque's funeral, and there were shouts that he should not be buried because he might be resurrected. Later, a stone known for displaying the faces of saints and virgins began to show the face of Palenque (Lazar 2002). He was a very important figure for most of my informants, for example, one friend told me that she thought Palenque might have been murdered, because he was sticking up for the poor, and another said that she thought he would have been president had he not died, and she believed that he would have helped the poor.²³

Although upper class, white, and a fully paid-up member of the political classes, Paredes did not denigrate Palenque as many others in a similar position had done, and in fact he showed reverence and respect for him. His invocation of Carlos Palenque's example was largely symbolic. He appropriated both Condepa campaign songs and their slogan – in Jose Luis Paredes' hands, the Condepista “uka Jach'a Uru jutaskiway” became “ha llegado el Gran Día” (“the Great Day has arrived”), a direct translation from the Aymara to Spanish.²⁴ He combined this skilful manipulation of symbol with a great deal of hard work, following Max Fernandez' example of “civic behaviour” (“civismo”), defined as a vocation of service to the community expressed through *obras* (Mayorga 1991). He claimed that since 1992 he had invested between two and three thousand US dollars a month in building materials given to different communities of El Alto, through the “social department” of his television channel, Channel 24.²⁵ The basketball hoops in the Rosas Pampa school had been provided by the MIR, and painted in MIR colours. Channel 24 also came to the zone to film a football match, which had proved very popular with the residents, according to Don Roberto. And there were jokes going around that there was hardly any school in El Alto without a television set from Jose Luis Paredes, as godfather.

²³ One can't help being a bit cynical about this: I have seen the outside of his very plush house in Calacoto, the wealthy area of southern La Paz, and I consider that he could have been using the poor for his own personal advantage, like any other politician. But there is no doubt that many thought he could have achieved something for them. Or at least that he was the only politician who might.

²⁴ It is important to note that the concept of the Jach'a Uru, or Great Day, was a particularly powerful one, that appealed to a strong Aymara stress on hope for change, expressed for example in the concept of ‘pachakuti’, or the ‘world turned upside down’. In this sense, its resonance for urban Aymaras was particularly strong (Saravia and Sandoval 1991). Paredes understood this, saying in the interview quoted above: “now I am the one who represents hope, change, modernity” (“ahora soy yo quien represento la esperanza, el cambio, la modernidad”), reflected well in the translation of the slogan from Aymara to Spanish. In this, Paredes picked up on the aspirational side of many urban Aymaras in El Alto, appealing to those wanting to stress their modernity, the difference between themselves and their *campesino* parents or grandparents.

²⁵ Pulso, *op. cit.*

It is, of course, difficult (but largely academic anyway) to disentangle which of the various gifts to different zones came from Pepelucho as an individual, which came from MIR money, and which from Channel 24. The point is that little by little, Pepelucho had been building personal ties with residents of El Alto, through cultural forms such as becoming *padrino de promoción*, (godfather of the graduating class in a school), or just providing some cement or bricks for school buildings or donating equipment. The *padrino de promoción* is responsible for funding at least part of the various ceremonies around graduation from high school, such as the 'toma de nombre' ceremony when the graduating class takes the name of their godfather prior to the end of the year (described in Chapter 8), and the graduation ceremony itself. They do not provide food or drink for the parents that come, but may fund the hiring of the hall, a meal for the teachers, pennants, flowers or badges given to each of the graduands. They are mainly responsible, however, for funding an activity, usually a vacation, for the class. Being a *padrino de promoción* is not cheap. However, it does mean that you are known as a generous person in the zone, not to mention godfather to 50 young people, who since 1994 could vote from the age of 18. Furthermore, the *padrino de promoción* becomes *compadre* to the parents of his godchildren. Donating equipment such as a television can also put you in the position of being *compadre*. Of course, an added advantage for Paredes of giving televisions to schools is that there is more chance of people seeing his television channel, and, perhaps more importantly, it underlines his position as owner of that channel, and an important player in El Alto. It may even be that Paredes was aping Palenque's position as owner of a TV channel.

The *compadrazgo* relationship is a very powerful one in Andean societies, and the links between the godparent and the parents of the godchild are often stronger than those between godparent and godchild. *Compadrazgo* serves mainly to cement friendships and alliances, and can be between people of the same class positioning or between those where one, the godparent, is of higher status or class than the parent (Bolton and Mayer 1977; Mintz and Wolf 1977; Long 1984). Clearly, the *compadrazgo* that results from being a godparent through sponsoring the baptism of a child is a much stronger link than that from being *padrino de promoción*. However, the latter reflects the former, and thereby shares some of its power. Being a '*padrino de televisión*' (i.e. a godfather who has donated a television) also benefits from the association with stronger forms of *compadrazgo*, even

though everyone is aware of why politicians are donating televisions or other equipment. Palenque had put a great deal of stress on *compadrazgo*, though, calling Condepa *militantes* and all of those who came to his television show “*compadre*” or “*comadre*”. He was “*el Compadre Palenque*”, and Condepa *militantes* were supposed to call each other *compadre* (Saravia and Sandoval 1991; Lazar 2002).

Furthermore, in consciously imitating Max Fernández’ strategy of “modest *obras*”, Paredes was able to call on peoples’ allegiance through *compadrazgo*, but also to demonstrate his willingness to invest in the community. The latter meant that out of a sense of reciprocity, people were prepared to vote for him because he had at least given them something. Second, people felt that the fact he had put his own money into *obras* implied that he would be prepared to put the municipality’s money into even bigger *obras*. Fernández had used the same logic, as a statement from the National Directive of the UCS in 1989 makes explicit:

“If we give the people bread today, when we are the government, we will give them work. If we give them medication today, when we are the government, we will give them health. ... If we give them bricks today, when we are the government, we will give them houses. If we give them pencils today, when we are the government, we will give them education.”

(“Si hoy al pueblo le damos pan, cuando seamos gobierno le daremos trabajo. Si hoy le damos medicamentos, cuando seamos gobierno le daremos salud. ... Si hoy le damos ladrillos, cuando seamos gobierno le daremos vivienda. Si hoy le damos lápices, cuando seamos gobierno le daremos educación.”) (quoted in Mayorga 1991: 84)

Personalism: working to become electable

The development of a personal relationship with politicians is an important citizenship practice for *Alteños* as they seek to assess the suitability of their prospective leaders/patrons; and to engage them in a reciprocal relationship where they feel obliged to serve the people in return for their electoral support. As Paredes’ activities show, the politicians recognise that elections are primarily a character assessment exercise, and that personal contact with politicians is central. A surprisingly large number of ordinary people, both particularly politicised and relatively apathetic, had met with the candidates. For example, Don Roberto had made a specific effort to meet up with Paredes prior to the election campaign. Condepa had built up its power base through personal contact with party militants and ordinary people on a daily basis in the TV

program *Tribuna Libre del Pueblo*. However, with most parties, such personal contact is only usually possible at campaign time and before, when the candidates are trying to charm potential voters. After they achieve power, they can hide behind multiple layers of bureaucracy, and accountability is almost nil.

In their assessment of candidates' characters, voters will reward perceived qualities of approachability, sincerity, honesty, generosity and wealth, all the qualities of a good patron. Rubén, my neighbour's nephew, explained to me that he had offered himself as organiser of the *Morenada* dance group that we took to Quilloma in April 2000 (discussed in Chapter 4) largely because he was thinking that some time in the future he might like to be a candidate for that particular municipality.²⁶ He said:

“My aim is to get myself known by the people there; because they look at your character, they have respect for what you do. You have to help people, and then they vote for the person that helped them. If you give them support, invest a little bit for them, they'll vote for you.”

(“Mi fin es hacerme conocer con la gente de allá; porque se fijan en tu persona, tienen respeto por lo que haces. Hay que ayudar a la gente, y después vota por quien te ayuda. Si tu les das un apoyo, invertir un poco para ellos, votan para ti.”)

He hadn't decided which party he would represent – he had relatives in the ADN who might help, he said, but local people “who used to be in Condepa” (meaning that he didn't know what party they would join after the elections) had also said they would support him, and his teacher at the UMSA was an important member of MAS, whose Trotskyite ideas were very attractive to Rogelio²⁷.

The MBL candidate for El Alto had been in a similar position, in that he had to weigh up offers from different parties. Jose Luis ‘Tren’ Martínez is the son of a prominent and successful *Alteño* businessman. In an interview, he told me that their firm has for many years invested in what Martínez called “the urban growth of El Alto”.²⁸ He has been involved in collaborations with international donor agencies to provide rural

²⁶ Quilloma is the *pueblo* of a number of the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa whom I knew. It is situated near to Patacamaya in the Aroma province in the south of the department of La Paz.

²⁷ It is very incongruous on the surface to be seriously weighing up membership of ADN versus MAS. The ADN's economic policies are very orthodox and right wing. MAS is the party of the *cocalero* leader, Evo Morales; the acronym stands for *Movimiento Al Socialismo*, Movement Towards Socialism.

²⁸ Their firm buys land around El Alto, then sells off small lots for people to build their houses. When this is done unscrupulously, without proper legal title to the land or on land that has already been sold, is unsafe because of potential erosion or collapse, or belongs to the municipality, the perpetrators are called

electrification, and has a large leisure centre in the north of El Alto, with sauna, swimming pool and squash courts. Through such activities, he has achieved a high profile in the city, and was first invited to be a candidate for another political party, the *Movimiento Sin Miedo* (Fearless Movement, MSM). However, he felt that he could not work with the MSM in El Alto, so picked the MBL, who seemed less selfish and controlling, and closer to his own ideas.

Martínez is perfect material to be a good local patron, since he is *conocido* in his area, and through his father's business, has been involved in various good works for *Alteños*. He is well aware of the need to play the various games of local politics. As such, in 2000, he agreed to be *padrino de promoción* for 8 classes of high school graduates, including the one in Rosas Pampa. He maintained that it was "a little bit about growing in the popularity aspect" ("un poquito [para] crecer en el aspecto popular"). But also that he wants to encourage "vocation for service" ("una vocación de servicio") in his 700 godchildren: "actually training people who have a feeling towards their society, and also take up the challenge to achieve something for their El Alto" ("el hecho de formar personas que tengan un sentimiento hacia su sociedad ... y un desafío también de lograr algo por su Alto"). He linked it very closely to enabling *Alteños* to "demand their rights" ("reivindicar sus derechos"), which was an important part of his political stance during his candidacy. He planned seminars and workshops for his godchildren, to 'orientar', or guide them. This also fits in with his electoral strategy, as his promotional material (called *Plan Identidad*²⁹) stressed his youth, one slogan being "A young city with a young mayor".

When he was present at the *toma de nombre* held for the Rosas Pampa graduation class, to which he arrived four hours late, it was notable how he took great care to press the flesh with all the parents, drinking at least one glass of beer with each family. Many people, including my Condepista friend, Doña Josefa, were very keen to get their picture taken with him, and one could see the personal relationship beginning. I left before the seminars for the students were scheduled to take place, and am not even sure if they happened, but it seemed a very sensible tactic to draw in the young people

loteadores. But Martínez stressed to me that they did their 'urban development' legally and according to appropriate studies and plans.

through ‘capacity-building’ and ‘orientation’. I have no doubt that the sole fact of being *padrino de promoción* will not be enough to get the parents voting for him, but it is a start. As Paredes proved, manoeuvring oneself into a position of electability takes a long time, and is not solely, or even possibly mostly, to do with having the right ideas.

***Obras* and corruption**

This section will discuss corruption and *obras* in order to further explore the relationship between citizen and state in the context of local government. I argue that, as with the community-based politics described in the previous chapter, corruption and *obras* together are tropes through which citizens attempt to assert their expectations of their leaders and hold them to account: so that the threat of accusation of the former leads politicians (one hopes) to build the latter. Since most people felt all politicians to be equally corrupt, the issue of corruption did not enable *Alteño* electors to choose between the political parties. However, in this section I show that discourses of corruption do reveal some of the values underlying political life, as well as perhaps discursively constituting political life and subjecthood.³⁰

The nickname *Pepelucho* stressed Paredes’s approachable, personable side. But he was also called ‘El Doctor’, a respectful nickname that highlighted a paternal side, and also a high level of education, and therefore status. This, coupled with the stress that the MIR placed on the fact that they were the only party with a real plan for government, emphasised their fit with a very important technocratic, non-affective, side to Bolivian politics.³¹ The document, entitled the *Plan Progreso*, is extremely detailed, with a New Labour feel to it, complete with targets and pledges. I doubt that it will be possible to meet these targets. Nonetheless, the important thing is that the MIR were able to present themselves as modernisers who would fund *obras* for El Alto. They did this mostly through proclaiming the existence of the government plan, even if it was hard to get hold of a copy in outlying zones such as Rosas Pampa.

²⁹ Its catchy slogan was “A New Era has Arrived for the Development of Identity and Citizenship, with Enterprise and Modernity” (“Un Nuevo Tiempo Ha Llegado para Desarrollar la Identidad y la Ciudadanía, con Emprendimiento y Modernidad”).

³⁰ As Akhil Gupta argues, “the discourse of corruption [is] a key arena through which the state, citizens, and other organisations and aggregations come to be imagined.” (Gupta 1995: 376).

As in the community politics described in the previous chapter, the emphasis on *obras* must be placed in the context of a pervasive view of politicians as corrupt. This was a very important theme in the local electoral campaigns of 1999³². The *Plan Progreso* helped the MIR to put clear blue water between themselves and Condepa, stressing that they would be more efficient and less corrupt than the previous administration. El Alto, which had been run for 10 years by Condepa, was in a terrible state by 1999, as everyone knew. Doña Gregoria told me about the scandal of missing tractors (hence the irony of Remedios turning up in a gleaming green tractor during her campaign). Don Roberto told me that, in order to get anything done in the municipal administration, you had to pay small bribes all the time. However, as Doña Josefa pointed out, the system of sharing out departments according to each party's electoral strength meant that corruption associated with what were MIRista departments reflected badly and unfairly on the Condepista Mayor. She reckoned that the Development department was the worst, and it was run by MIR people. This of course did not stop Jose Luis Paredes appearing on TV one evening with his "whip against corruption" ("chicote contra la corrupción") in his hand³³.

Corruption talk, accountability and representativity

I often heard from friends, of all classes, that although Bolivia has everything in terms of natural riches, the politicians steal everything, so Bolivia has not been able to 'advance'. I was told that Bolivian politicians even steal international aid: one friend (not a development worker) estimated that only a quarter ever reached its destination. The piles of second hand clothes sold wholesale at the markets in the Ceja have usually been diverted from humanitarian aid packages sent from the US to Bolivia; and there were rumours that, at the time of an earthquake in Aiquile in 1997, almost none of the aid sent from international donors reached the earthquake victims, but Goni (the president of the time) ended up with a shiny new presidential aeroplane. At a more local level, the Popular Participation legislation is also the subject of numerous

³¹ Gamarra argues that the technocratic element of Bolivian government, particularly noticeable in the Sanchez de Lozada administration of 1993-7, is evidence of the authoritarian legacy of the dictatorship era (Gamarra 2002).

³² In both El Alto and La Paz. In La Paz, the entry into the mayoral race of Juan Del Granado, a respected human rights lawyer and parliamentary deputy, led to a media focus on his anti-corruption and pro-participatory democracy rhetoric. He eventually won the election, by a very small margin

³³ The MIR candidate for La Paz, Jorge Torres, particularly emphasized this detail, on billboards, TV and newspaper ads, etc. The chicote is a small whip that parents use to discipline their children.

corruption rumours. In all these stories, from the colourful to the more sober, corruption explains underdevelopment, in a departure from *dependista* explanations such as the anti-neocolonial discourses of nationalist and leftist (and also some rightist) politics.³⁴ Here, the subalterns blame the elites: Bolivia is not underdeveloped because of its citizens being backward (which one does occasionally hear also from Bolivians of all classes), or because of an inauspicious environment, or because of its place in the global economy. Rather, a country that could be wealthy is betrayed by elite leaders, who are *personalistas* and *interesados*. Thus self-esteem and pride in the country, land, environment and the masses of the people, can be maintained. The people telling these stories are collectively imagining themselves as ‘citizens despite the state’, rather than citizens that are constituted through a positive relationship with the state.

At the same time, something is being said about the distance between politicians/elites and the masses, in terms of democracy and social class. The stories told around corruption, and the rumours and suspicions that abound regarding anyone in power, can tell us something about people’s relation to the state, their country and their community, i.e. their citizenship. I overheard the following comment in a taxi: “we queue up in order to pay taxes, they queue up in order to steal” (“Nosotros hacemos fila para pagar impuestos, ellos hacen fila para robar”). Through talking in this way about politics, the lack of felt representativity becomes apparent; and the democratic nature of the Bolivian delegative democracy is opened up to criticism. Corruption is a reason or trope for feelings of disenfranchisement and marginalisation. One of my neighbours spoiled her ballot paper in the 1999 election, because “they’re all corrupt and liars” (“todos son corruptos y mentirosos”). Another friend felt that corruption was linked to democracy itself. He told me that in Cuba they used to shoot *corruptos*, so, because of the deterrent, there was no corruption, and said “this democracy law, it makes people manipulative” (“esa ley de democracia, hace maniudo a la gente”).

However, as the previous chapter showed, disentangling what we mean by corruption is by no means easy – there are many stories told every day. Corruption is both everywhere and nowhere, because it is never made explicit. And, of course, what to one person is corruption is another person’s way of being paid for the work they do. Telling

³⁴ On a global level, corruption serves a similar function, replacing both modernization and dependency theories of development, as I point out in chapter 1.

a story about corruption generally serves more to highlight the moral integrity of the teller than anything else – corruption is always somewhere else, perpetrated by someone else. Comments from the two aspiring politicians introduced earlier, Rubén and Jose Luis ‘Tren’ Martínez, reflect some of the ambiguities of corruption talk.

Rubén was weighing up the possibility of standing for election in his *pueblo*, and Jose Luis ‘Tren’ Martínez was the MBL candidate for Mayor of El Alto in 1999. Both spoke of corruption in politics as a result of the investment required to be elected. When asked for his assessment of Paredes’ new government, Martínez said

“I at least think that they have made a big investment in order to enter local government, and the symptoms you can see straight away is a return on that investment.

(“Yo por lo menos tengo la idea de que ellos han hecho una inversión fuerte para ingresar a la Alcaldía y el síntoma inmediato que se nota es la recuperación de esa misma inversión.”)

Here, he is talking about Paredes in the same way as Paredes spoke in the interview quoted earlier in this chapter, where he pointed out how much of his personal resources he had invested in becoming Mayor.

Rubén thought that in Bolivia there is “too much corruption” (“demasiada corrupción”), as politicians go into positions of power purely to “extract benefits” (“sacar beneficios”). But as far as he was concerned, he wanted “to work more for people, get something out of it, but not much” (“yo quiero trabajar más para la gente, sacar algo pero no mucho”). Notable here is his view that there can be “too much” corruption, implying that there are degrees of corruption, some of which are appropriate. Rubén was a close friend of mine, and it is reasonable to assume that he was more frank with me than Martínez had been regarding his own ambitions. He was probably being realistic about politics: being a candidate for any position is an investment, and one usually expects returns on investments. He estimated that he had spent US\$700-800 on taking the *Morenada* to Quilloma, and, if he decided to continue in politics, he knew he would have to find the money for something more concrete, and more expensive. For him, it was therefore only reasonable to expect some return. It is the *level* of return that is contestable, along with the amount of work you do to benefit your ‘people’ or your village. This is reflected in the common assessment of one of the most successful mayors in Bolivia, Manfred Reyes Villa, nicknamed El Bombón, and

Mayor of Cochabamba for 3 successive terms: one often hears people say that “he steals, but at least he does something”.³⁵

Corruption and obras

Although people talk so often and so negatively about politicians being *corruptos*, I suspect that *Paceños* and *Alteños* who almost longingly talk of Bombón would rather have a corrupt mayor that did *obras* than a completely honest one who did nothing visible. The focus on *obras* is unsurprising given the needs that actually exist in residential zones of El Alto, and anyway, at high levels of power, complete honesty is often thought impossible (cf. Parry 2000). Electors assess the value of a politician despite and beyond their presumed corruption. Doña Gregoria’s comment about the MIR, mentioned above, reflects this: “they’re corrupt, but at least they keep their promises” (“son corruptos, pero por lo menos cumplen”). The default position for a politician is that they will steal public money.³⁶ Given this, when looking closer at the newspaper reports, the picture becomes much muddier: is a politician who says they made ‘mistakes’ corrupt or inefficient or stupid? (Probably all three). There are differences between ‘malversación de fondos’ or ‘fondos malgastados’ (‘embezzlement’, ‘misspent funds’), ‘getting a return on one’s investment’ and stealing, depending upon the positionality of the person narrating that particular corruption story.

Corruption is culturally specific. It is difficult to pin down, mixed up with rumour, exaggeration, euphemism and story-telling. As such it is a good means for going some way towards understanding Bolivian political life, both for outsiders and Bolivians. Corruption talk enables people to make evaluations of those in power, according to how *personalista* or *interesado* they are. The diversion of public money for private gain is a widely-accepted definition of corruption (Haller 2002), and although understandings of public and private cannot be assessed to be the same cross-culturally, informants did intuitively make distinctions between Bolivia’s money and personal resources: corrupt politicians clearly steal the former. What is at issue is the **extent** to which public money

³⁵ I have overheard this in a taxi, and been told it by friends from both El Alto and the wealthy areas of La Paz. He stood for President in 2002, and was the leader in the opinion polls for much of the electoral campaign. Eventually, he came a close third, 712 votes behind Evo Morales in second place.

³⁶ This is the view of Bolivians at all strata of society: for example, a wealthy friend of mine was talking about Ronald Maclean, a candidate in the 1999 elections for La Paz, when another friend said that she’d heard he had been honest in a previous mayoral administration. My friend said, quite matter-of-factly, “no, he must have stolen, but he did things” (“no, ha debido robar, pero ha hecho cosas”). Ronald

is diverted for personal gain, or, more importantly, redistributed to the people, through *obras* or jobs, these being linked because it is the *militantes* who get the jobs to build the *obras*. Of course, the evaluations that people make of politicians do slip, and vary according to context and person, but their mobilisation illuminates the kinds of expectations people have.³⁷ And in the Bolivian case, corruption, and political life in general, cannot be understood apart from the expectations and needs people have for *obras*, as tangible evidence of political activity.

Hence the frequent repetition of increasingly unrealistic promises of *obras* for El Alto during election campaigns, as shown in the MIR *Plan Progreso*. One time, when the election campaign was nearly over, and several political parties had come to Rosas Pampa to promise *obras* and then leave again, I was joking with young friends of mine in Rosas Pampa because the MIR candidate for La Paz had promised to build a system of cable cars between the two cities if he were elected. One young man proposed a “star *obra*” (“*obra estrella*”) of a system of tubes so that people could slide from the heights of El Alto down to La Paz!³⁸ *Obras* are concrete (often literally) evidence that politicians have been working in the people’s interests, however much money they might have siphoned off for their own benefit. Ironically, although it is largely true that mayors and councillors make a lot of money through bribery and stealing while in office, the largest part of a municipality’s budget goes on wages (Blanco Cazas and Sandoval 1993). While Condepa was in power in El Alto, half of the budget went on wages, a third on debt servicing, and less than a fifth on new *obras*.³⁹ It is here that parties are caught between two imperatives: the need to give jobs to their *militantes* and the need to fund *obras*, again linked together, but this time in a negative way. Condepa held the allegiance of many of people because they “helped poor people” through

Maclean is actually one of the very few mayors of La Paz who is talked about as honest, but for my friend this was inconceivable.

³⁷ This is an indication of what Bayart (1993) calls a ‘politics of the belly’. His study shows that, in Cameroon, politics is about the accumulation of wealth and its subsequent redistribution, in order to satisfy and increase a politician’s clientele. Politicians are not viewed as public servants, following a ‘Western’ bureaucratic paradigm of work for the common good. They are entitled to, and expected to, accumulate wealth personally, and use it to benefit their social networks, including above all their family. How acceptable this is in Bolivia varies according to the context, but what is similar is that Bolivian patrons are expected to redistribute their wealth, and the wealth of the state, through the provision of jobs to their clients.

³⁸ Local election campaigns in El Alto and La Paz often focus on the problem of transport between the two cities, since the current motorway takes a long time and cannot carry the amounts of people traveling at rush hour. Politicians frequently propose highly expensive and quite ridiculous plans, elaborated at great expense by architects and engineering consultants.

³⁹ *Pulso*, 19-25 November, 1999

clientelistic party mechanisms, even if they did not pay back the zones with many actual *obras*. However, that tolerance was only extended up to a point, and Remedios Loza was unable to replicate Carlos Palenque's aura of incorruptibility, partly due to the factionalism within the party, and partly because, after 10 years, and given the presence of a promising alternative, enough *Alteños* were fed up of having an inactive municipal administration to vote Condepa out.

Election Day

On Election Day, despite the fact that most people said to me at one point or another that politicians were "liars and corrupt" ("mentirosos y corruptos"), the actual process was taken very seriously. Voting is compulsory, and travel is forbidden for 48 hours around Election Day, as is the selling of alcohol. There is an almost festive atmosphere in the zone, with children playing out on the streets, which are empty of cars and buses. People voted in the school, in ten separate classrooms, which is where the votes were also counted, at the end of the day. The 'table delegates' held up every single ballot paper (there were around 200 papers in each table) in front of party delegates so that they could confirm the accuracy of their count, and argue if a vote was unclear. Each of the party delegates noted down how many votes had been cast for each of the parties in their room. At the same time, prominent men of the community went round each classroom noting down the votes for the different parties. I took the opportunity to do the same.

Given the oft-repeated expressions of disillusionment with politics, one would perhaps expect high levels of voter apathy. However, turnout in Rosas Pampa was reasonably high: 63% of those registered, and, of the votes cast, only 7% were void or blank. Although voting is compulsory, the voting register includes people who registered for previous elections and subsequently moved away or died (Gray Molina 2002). I counted 1719 votes cast in Rosas Pampa, which represents a good turnout for a zone of 1000 households. It seems that on Election Day itself the local residents were determined to make sure that no corruption would occur in their school, and that the forms of democracy for which they themselves were responsible would at least be properly observed and accountable to them. Their performance (in Judith Butler's (1990) sense) of a 'proper' election, can be seen as a kind of resistance, a refusal to simply abandon

themselves to political corruption. In this way, they used formal citizenship practices to maintain collective dignity and stake a claim to accountability.

During the campaign, and on the Election Day itself, one of the complaints that I heard most often was that successive Mayors had forgotten about the zone of Rosas Pampa. The attempts to develop a personal relationship with politicians are a response to this tendency for faceless bureaucrats to marginalize poor areas. This is not peculiar to Bolivia, of course. As Robert Gay points out, in Brazil, the “least privileged elements of ... society” unsurprisingly “embrace clientelism as a hedge against what is often perceived not as democratisation but as bureaucratic indifference and exclusion” (1998: 16). However, clientelism is not purely a hedge against social exclusion. This chapter has shown some of the ways in which residents of El Alto endeavoured (and often succeeded) in turning the ‘time of elections’ (Auyero 2000) to their advantage. This quite clearly demonstrates the working of a set of political strategies attuned to the realities of local administration. Robert Albro calls it “sound Andean logic” (2000:41), whereby politicians exchange gifts for political capital in reciprocal arrangements.⁴⁰ As Robert Gay says:

The problem is that we have become so accustomed to thinking of clientelism as a mechanism of institutional control – often referred to as corporatism – or the product of ‘false consciousness’ – often referred to as populism – that we have failed to consider the possibility that clientelism might be embraced as a popular political strategy. (1998: 14)

The popular strategies of clientelism during these election campaigns can be understood as attempts to substantiate citizenship; the popular sectors here are using clientelism to temporarily redress the normal balance of unrepresentative politics. Most obviously, politicians have to deliver **before** they get the vote, and, since it is secret, even that is not a given (Gay 1998). In the process, they gained benefit for the zone and also asserted the right of Rosas Pampa to receive *obras* once the winning party took over the *Alcaldía*.

⁴⁰ Of course, this is by no means confined to the Andes. See for example (Schmidt, Scott et al. 1977; Roniger and Gunes-Ayata 1994)

Conclusions

This chapter has shown that the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa practice their citizenship as much if not more through their pre-election participation in clientelist politics as through the infrequent, though meticulous, act of voting. Through the development of a personal relationship with the candidates, clients/voters made them directly representative. In some ways clientelism makes politics even more representative than the normative, delegative, electoral democracies envisioned by Liberal citizenship theory. The fact that civil service jobs at so many levels depend upon political affiliation does create incentives to corruption and maladministration. However, it also means that there is a sense in which, when people engage in campaign activities on behalf of political parties, they are standing for election themselves, except not for Mayor or councillor, but for office assistant, nurse or school porter. This issue of representativity and democracy is not a purely abstract theoretical question: one day, as the election was nearing, Don Roberto muttered that “exactly the most corrupt people” (“justo los más corruptos”) were leading the MIR campaign in the zone, in the hopes of jobs afterwards. He recognised implicitly that he was not only voting for Paredes and the MIR councillors, but for the people who would take up roles in all of the tiers of public administration in El Alto.

The engagement between citizens and the state encouraged by clientelism contrasts with the sense of estrangement expressed by the corruption stories that I heard during my fieldwork. They are ways of narrating democracy, as the focus on politicians’ propensity to steal public resources emphasises the distance between ‘the people’ and the elites. Corruption explains underdevelopment, through labelling politicians as unpatriotic thieves who have stolen all Bolivia’s natural resources. At the subaltern level, corruption narratives become a way to understand and express the powerlessness Bolivian citizens feel when it comes to holding their rulers to account. They are also about class: at the heart of most corruption talk is a dispute over the correct distribution of economic resources: to the people, or the *personalista* politician/elites.⁴¹

⁴¹ This dispute has perhaps become more heated in the last two decades of the 20th Century because of the hegemony of neoliberal economic politics, although private ownership of resources viewed as national has been an important issue for Bolivia for the whole of the 20th Century, because of the tin mines (Dunkerley 1984; Nash 1993). Dubious distribution of privatisation contracts are often sources of corruption allegations, again this is a dispute over the correct destination of ‘public’ resources, in terms of their associated profits. Allied to the talk of politicians stealing Bolivia’s resources is a widespread disapproval of the ‘selling off’ of Bolivia’s resources in the form of privatisation, such as selling natural

Thus, narrating corruption serves as a means for people to represent and explain not just their political marginality but also their position in the distribution of economic power. Yet the nuances and ambiguities of peoples' feelings about corruption reveal a further layer. If it is generally understood that political office is seen as an economic investment, and that politicians want a return on that investment, the voters are happy for this to happen, as long as the politician in question also builds *obras*.

The common factor in these processes of engagement and estrangement is the extent to which the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa imagine themselves collectively, either as a body of clients of one politician or through constituting the zone itself as a client; or through portraying themselves as the Bolivian people betrayed by venal politicians, what I have called 'citizens despite the state'. The corporate approach to politics culminated on Election Day itself, as many individuals based their calculations upon what would be best for Rosas Pampa, and collectively performed a 'proper' election. The zone asserted its control over democracy at that moment, and its pride in the fact that at least there the election was beyond question. Citizens clearly value local democracy, and their feelings about it are markedly less cynical than their opinions of politicians. The performance of a scrupulously-observed election was a way for the *vecinos* to confirm the importance of the zone and stake their claim to collective membership of a democratic Bolivian state. In other words, this chapter has demonstrated in detail the dialectic between individual and community at the heart of the political process, as individuals exercise their citizenship through different corporate groupings in order to gain the best outcomes they can.

gas or water concessions to international companies. David Sneath (2002) found that the single most important form of corruption for informants in Mongolia was irregular privatisation.

CHAPTER 4

PLACE, MOVEMENT AND RITUAL

While the previous two chapters have focussed on more overtly political forms of citizenship practice, in this chapter I move to discuss ritual as an example of the construction of community, with a focus on fiestas in Rosas Pampa and Quilloma. The foundational act of Rosas Pampa as urban zone in 1975 was the organisation of the *Junta Vecinal*, and one of their first acts was to establish the patronal fiesta of the zone (Musch, Valdez et al. 1994). Today the organisation of the fiesta is the main responsibility of the Junta, and one of the most important ways in which the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa constitute themselves as collective political subjects. Annual cycle ceremonies, particularly the annual anniversary fiesta (held on the patron saint's day) are central to how people experience their membership of local and national communities in Bolivia. Dance is one of the main focuses of the fiesta¹, and in this chapter I argue that this makes dance a central citizenship practice for El Alto, and highlights the embodied nature of citizenship if viewed from the perspective of the citizens rather than political structures. Since Durkheim, it has become standard practice in anthropological theory to highlight the role of ritual in the building of senses of community and belonging, and the political implications of this have occasionally been acknowledged in political anthropology.² However, although Rousseau recognised the importance of ritual to any discussion of citizenship, with his work on 'civil religion', most discussions of citizenship theory fail to address ritual, or religion, seriously.

Through movement, the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa perform, define and reproduce their senses of community, or collective belonging. These senses of belonging consist of three main sets of relationships: first, relations with the zone; second, senses of commonality and togetherness with other *vecinos*; and third, senses of the distinctions and hierarchies between members of the collectivity. The community, then, comprises all the relations between people and also between people and locality in Rosas Pampa, which are experienced as sacred. Those relations are experienced and talked about mostly as obligations on the part of the individual member – responsibilities rather than

¹ With alcohol, which I discuss in the following chapter.

² See Swartz (1968), Kertzer (1988), Boissevain (1992), Gledhill (1994), Lomnitz (1995) and Banck (1998).

rights, but responsibilities in a context of expected reciprocity, from all participants in those relationships, including the zone itself, a point developed further in Chapter 5. Juliana Ströbele-Gregor, in an article on ‘Culture and Political Practice of the Aymara and Quechua in Bolivia’, sums it up thus:

The available ethnographic data clearly demonstrate how the idea of community is celebrated and continually reconstituted in ritual festivities. The point is not only to reinforce group cohesion but also to strengthen the ties to the supernatural force. (Ströbele-Gregor 1996: 79)

In this chapter, I add a physical focus to the “available ethnographic data”³, in my emphasis on the importance of bodily movement in the processes of community building, which I explore using phenomenological approaches.⁴

The Fiesta

Not every resident of El Alto will dance in a particular fiesta, but most who are not Evangelical Protestants will at some point in their lives dance, either in the annual fiesta of the urban zone in which they live or in their (or their spouse’s) *pueblo*. Some dance every year if possible in one, or even both, of these fiestas. Fiestas in *pueblos* in the countryside are often very important for urban migrants who originally came from there. Migrants often go back to their *pueblos* only once a year, on the date of the fiesta, and this may involve taking a group of dancers, called a *comparsa*, to perform a dance.⁵ In April of 2000, I went to a *pueblo* called Quilloma with a *comparsa* of *Morenada* dancers.

Rosas Pampa holds its fiesta on or around the 14th September each year, the day of the Señor de la Exaltación, Christ’s exaltation on the Cross.⁶ The religious element interacts in a complex way with the intensely **local** nature of the celebrations to heighten their importance for the majority of *vecinos*. Supervising the zone’s anniversary fiesta is probably the most important responsibility for the *Junta Vecinal*, more important even than gaining *obras* for the zone.

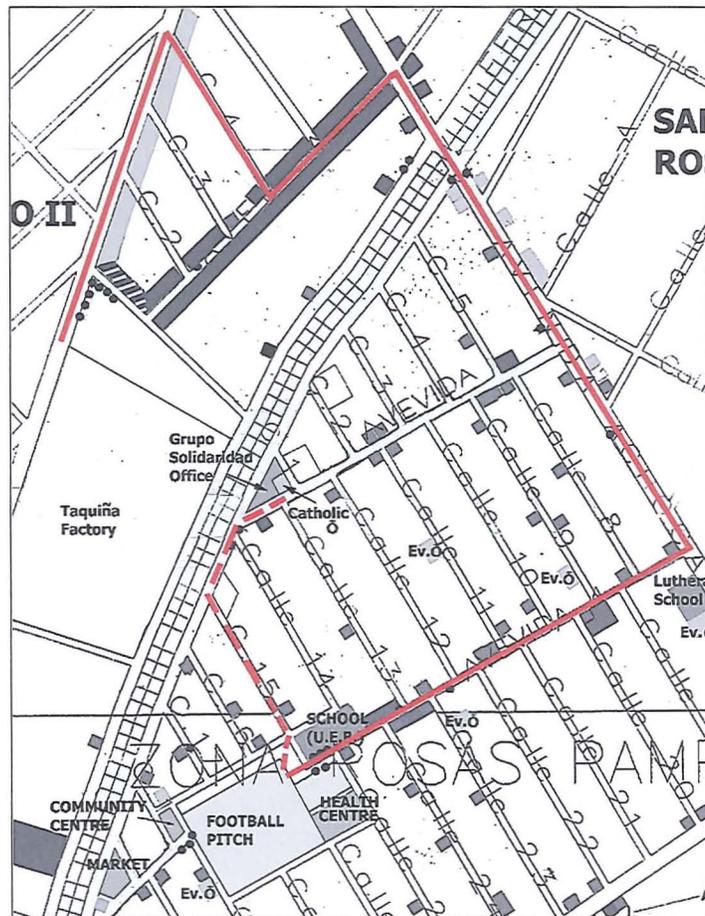
³ Such as Buechler (1980) Albó and Preiswerk (1986), Sallnow (1987), Carter (1989), Abercrombie (1991; 1998) and Bigenho (2001).

⁴ Thomas Csordas (1999) argues that a discussion of embodied experience is an essential counterpart to the discussion of representation in anthropology. This raised some methodological questions for me – see the methods section of Chapter 1. This chapter addresses the problem of how to represent dance through using a mixture of written description and photographs, as well as some accompanying video footage, which can be found on the CD-Rom attached to the inside cover. This can be played on any PC, and I provide prompts in the text for when to view the extracts. For further instructions, see the file videos.html on the CD, or Appendix II.

⁵ The fiesta is perhaps more relevant/important to the urban-dwelling *residentes* as an expression of connection to place; the residents of the *pueblo* itself are not always delighted about the ‘invasion’.

⁶ A very important saint in *altiplano* Bolivia.

I participated twice in the Rosas Pampa fiesta; once as spectator, once as dancer of the *Kullawada*. The Rosas Pampa fiestas of 1999 and 2000 followed similar timetables: on the Friday morning, the schoolchildren paraded around the zone, finishing in the football field in 1999 and in front of the school in 2000.⁷ Then, in the afternoon, the *comparsas* danced through the zone in full costume. This is called the *Entrada*, and follows the route shown on the diagram below. Led by the members of the *Junta Vecinal*, the *comparsas* begin at the beer factory, which is on the outskirts of the zone, and move through the zone, ending in the football field, to display their steps in front of the *Junta Vecinal*, who are stationed on a lorry by now, to judge the dancing, along with any visiting guests there might be. This part is called the *palco*, and the parade stops here, but the dancers continue in their groups to a gathering at the church, to pay their respects to the figure of the Señor de Exaltación; and for refreshments. There is not a formal Mass at this time.



Map 4. *Entrada* Route

⁷ Because the stretch of road in front of the school had been paved, as described in Chapter 2.

Throughout the ritual of the fiesta, the secular, formal, and civic merge with the religious. The procession route illustrates this well. The guests are secular and civic: in 2000, the *Junta* invited a representative of the El Alto Federation of *Juntas Vecinales* to be judge of the dancing. Another illustration of the merging of more formal citizenship practices with the fiesta is the importance of the civic parades by schoolchildren on the Friday morning. They follow the same route as the later *Entrada*, and were also judged, in 2000 by the Mayor of El Alto as well as the *Junta Vecinal*. The judges led the procession, followed by a group of female members of the *Junta Escolar*, then the schoolchildren of the zone, from both the local state school and the private Lutheran school. Chapter 8 discusses the nature of schoolchildren's parades as citizenship practice; and the *Entrada* is in many ways an adult analogue of those parades.⁸ The timing of the two on the principal day of the fiesta is no coincidence. They are equally important, but the more formal/civic part of the festivities must happen while people are still sober, and needs to be finished before the fun can start.

After the *Entrada* finished, each *comparsa* then went to drink at their organisers' houses or at a room hired for the occasion. The following morning, there was an early Mass at the church, followed by what is called the *Diana*, when the dancers danced the same route in civil clothes. After this, there was the prize-giving at the *palco*, followed by more drinking and celebrations in the football field. Spatially, the football field, not the church, was the centre of action during the fiesta, as it is under normal circumstances in Rosas Pampa⁹. At this point in the fiesta of 2000, many people sloped off to sleep off the effects of the alcohol, returning that evening for more drinking at the organisers' house. On the Sunday morning, more drinking, and preparation for dancing during the bullfight held in the football field in the afternoon, when the *comparsas* traditionally enter the ring with the bulls and dance round the outskirts.¹⁰

⁸ The distinction between adult and child form of citizenship practice is symbolic, but not total: adults participated in the schoolchildren's parades, and the children also participated in the *Entrada*, as a *comparsa* organized by the school. Street demonstrations are another citizenship practice that are physically similar to both the parades and the *Entradas*. I discuss this also in Chapter 8.

⁹ All the community buildings apart from the church are positioned around the football field – the health center, the school, the market and the Community Center built by the *Junta Vecinal* while I was there. As described in Chapter 2, political and community meetings were always held there, and the weekend football matches were very important in the life of the male *vecinos*.

¹⁰ This is not as frightening as might at first be thought: the bullfight is held in the football pitch, which is ringed by buses and trucks, to stop the bulls getting out and to provide seating for the audience. The bulls rarely approach the dancers, because they are being distracted by the young men taunting them with capes. Although I do not cover the bullfight in detail in this chapter, because my data for the dancing is much richer, it is an important part of the fiesta, which requires a fair amount of organization on the part

The *Entrada* is extremely popular, and whole families go to sit at the side of the road and watch the dancers, munching on popcorn and encouraging them as they progress. Men, women and children go up and down the streets selling popcorn, sweets, biscuits and other foods. There is also usually a funfair for the children. The *Entrada* is free and available to everyone. The costumes are beautiful and the dances, when properly rehearsed, impressive. Nearly the whole zone comes out to watch the dancing, and more people besides, since people come from other zones to see. The zone is on display to others. Although zones do not compete with each other, there is a great deal of pride attached to putting on a good show.

In the two fiestas I attended in Rosas Pampa, there were four *comparsas* dancing, each *comparsa* comprising 30-50 people. The neighbouring zone of Santiago II managed 11 *comparsas*, and bigger zones, such as 16 de Julio, can have over twenty. The biggest fiestas in Bolivia, with anything up to 50-odd *comparsas* participating, are Carnival in Oruro, the *Entrada del Señor de Gran Poder* in La Paz, and the *Entrada Universitaria* in La Paz.¹¹ The *comparsas* compete good-naturedly for prizes: in 2000, our *Kullawada* won the prize for 'danzas livianas' (light dances, i.e. not *Morenada*). We didn't win the overall prize of best dance, because that had to go to a *Morenada* group¹², but some dancers thought that we were acclaimed so loudly at the *palco* that we should have won.

In all these fiestas, the physical form is the same: the *comparsas* dance one of several different types of dance, which have different steps but the same general format. They parade in turn along a specific route, and are accompanied by a brass band who usually walk at the back of the *comparsa*, unless it is large enough to require two bands. At the front of the group there are mascots, who might be children, young women, or a couple dressed in particularly ornate or symbolic versions of the costume worn by the other dancers. They are followed by the dancers in lines, either in single sex groups or in couples, depending on the dance.

of the Junta Vecinal and attracts a large audience. Penelope Harvey argues that the bullfight brings together the powers of state institutions/authorities and of the landscape. Many of her insights would apply to bullfights in El Alto, which are very similar to that described by Harvey for Ocongate, Peru, with the notable exception that they do not involve a condor playing with the bulls (Harvey 1997).

¹¹ Carnival is the week of Ash Wednesday, Gran Poder is around the 23rd of June, and the *Entrada Universitaria* is at the end of July.

¹² The *Morenada* is a more prestigious dance. See below.

The people at the head of the lines are called 'guides', and they dictate which steps the dancers behind them will dance. There is a basic step which enables the dancers to move forward, and about 4-6 special steps, which are based on the basic formula, but might involve turning, swapping positions, or jumping, in the more energetic dances. The elaborateness of such steps depends on a number of factors, such as the age of the dancers, their energy, and the amount of time they have spent rehearsing. They can be very simple. The dancers dance the basic step until the guides indicate with their hands the number of the special step they want the dancers to dance, and whistle to prompt the group to move into that step.

The end result is usually extremely impressive. Much effort goes into creating the costumes, and practising so that everybody in the *comparsa* does the correct steps at the correct times. The effect is quite spectacular. The bands are highly skilled, and very entertaining, with coordinated clothes and their own dance steps.

[See Video Extracts 1 and 2]

Individual, community and space: togetherness.

This section makes the case for the centrality of the fiesta to the collective experience and expression of community in Rosas Pampa. The importance of the fiesta for the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa is highlighted by the role of the community leaders in its organisation. The *Junta Vecinal* is not only a central agent in the performance of the fiesta, but also the primary agency responsible for organising it. And organising the fiesta is their one year-on-year responsibility. Even if they have been less than successful in their other role, that of obtaining basic services and development for the zone from the municipal government, this is the one time when they can discharge their obligations as leaders. For some of the more minor members of the *Junta*, the run-up to the fiesta was the only time they attended meetings with any regularity. The *Junta* had to coordinate with the organisers of the *comparsas*, invite dignitaries to judge the dance competition, decide on the final route and timetable, sell lots for people to set up food and drink stalls, and so on.¹³

¹³ The leading role played by the *Junta Vecinal* in the organization of the fiesta is not automatic. Hans Buechler noted that during the 1960s and 70s, the *Juntas* tended to have a limited involvement in fiestas

Helping with the fiesta was also seen as a responsibility for those *vecinos* who could contribute. The more wealthy ones, such as the transport unions, the local Taquiña beer factory, local businessmen, and me, were approached by the *Junta Vecinal* to provide trophies for the dance groups, beer, or prizes for the participants in the bullfight (which were called *enjalmes*, and usually blankets). Such people are well-known, relatively wealthy, and have often given in previous years. As one member of the *Junta Vecinal* told me, they give because “they’re *vecinos*, *conocidos*, they have to give” (“son *vecinos*, *conocidos*, tienen que dar”). They give because it is their zone. This issue of the nature of collaboration for the fiesta is illustrated by the events in the run-up to the fiesta of 2000. The fiestas were generally organised on the basis of who had collaborated in previous years. However, in 2000, the Junta did attempt to prevent one resident from bringing in his group of young men to taunt the bulls, and, more importantly, from running a bar in the football field for the duration of the fiesta. His story shows the intertwining of the fiesta, ordinary zonal politics as described in Chapter 2, and the obligations of a *vecino*; as well as the ways in which the *Junta Vecinal* regulated the community.

Calixto’s story: organising the community

Just prior to the General Assembly in August, some of the *Junta Vecinal* leaders had raised concerns about Calixto’s bar during the fiestas, arguing that Calixto had become “bien vicioso” (“really immoral/anti-social”)¹⁴ lately. The fiesta bars are notorious for staying open all night so that people get very drunk, and in some zones this has led to fights and even deaths. At the very least, people are unable to sleep. Furthermore, the group of young men that Calixto brought in to run with and taunt the bulls were rowdy and drunken, throwing stones at people, for example. The *Junta Vecinal* asked the *vecinos* present at the Assembly whether they thought that Calixto should be allowed to run his bar again, and they said no. Calixto had not been present at this General Assembly, but he turned up to the *Junta Vecinal* meeting on 1st September to argue his case.

in La Paz, arguing that this reflected a general lack of political importance. Where the *Juntas’* political functions were well developed, particularly in marginal neighbourhoods, they took a more prominent role in organising neighbourhood fiestas (Buechler 1980: 172-4).

¹⁴ *vicioso* derives from *vicio*, or ‘vice’, ‘bad habit’. Penelope Harvey points out that in Ocongate, *vicioso* refers to anti-social drunkenness “excessive drinking by persons whose drunkenness is not harnessed to the regeneration of community” (1991: 216).

When he spoke, he was extremely polite and formal, and thanked them profusely for allowing him to come. He also pointed out that he had begun to put in a kerbstone outside his house, as he had been asked to by the *Junta Vecinal* and his *Jefe de Calle*. This was important at the time because the *Alcaldía's* scheme for paving some streets in El Alto relied upon the *vecinos* providing kerbstones outside their house (see Chapter 2). Most of the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa had done this a few years previously, when they had received grants of materials from the *Alcaldía*, but there were a few 'lazy' people who were now being pressured by their *Jefe de Calle*. If they didn't do it, the whole street would not be paved. Calixto was very keen to show that he was making good his previous errors, and being a responsible citizen. He was well aware that his errors were partly responsible for him missing out on an extremely important business opportunity.

On that point, he argued that he was a responsible bar owner, and that the really noisy drunken bars were the province of women coming in from other zones, who bring their customers with them. He even said that these women had claimed to have paid various *Juntas Vecinales* more (i.e. bribed them) for the privilege of staying open later than they should. He considered that, as an old *vecino*, one who had lived in the zone for a long time, he should not be penalised; and his friends on the *Junta Vecinal* committee backed him up. They felt it important that those running bars should be *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa, not people coming from Santa Rosa, who are "pure thieves" ("puros rateros"). But others felt that the *Junta* becomes responsible if the owners of bars attract "people of poor quality" ("gente de mala calidad"). They argued that they had a responsibility to implement decisions taken by the General Assembly, and that Calixto should have been present then to argue his case. Those who had attended the General Assembly, the "bases", were the "maximum authority" ("maxima autoridad").

In the end, they agreed that Calixto would be able to have his bar, until midnight only, but could not bring in his young friends for the bullfight. Calixto gratefully said that this was acceptable to him, that he didn't want 'bad blood' simply for one or two days of business during fiesta. He said "I'm ready to collaborate with my zone because it's my zone: I don't want to be an enemy of my own zone" ("estoy presto para colaborar con mi zona porque es mi zona; no quiero ser enemigo de mi propia zona"). He then brought in soft drink and beer for all of us at the meeting, to thank the *Junta*, show his willingness to be trustworthy, and seal the agreement.

On the one hand, Calixto had a strong commercial imperative: a bar in a prime site during your own zonal fiesta is extremely good business. On the other, the rowdiness, drunkenness and criminality associated with such bars worried the residents, and many would have preferred to have none at all. The compromise position was to try and limit the running of bars to people from the zone, who were more easy to regulate. Even women from Santa Rosa, or Santiago II, which are neighbouring zones, were outsiders, and suspect, because they were not *conocidas*. Calixto had at least been around for a long time. Since I did not know him, I cannot comment with authority on the sincerity of his expressions of desire to collaborate with his zone. But his situation illustrates the complex mixture of self-interest and commitment to the zone that encourages people to collaborate with the *Junta Vecinal* in the organisation of the fiesta.

Calixto's comments, that he did not wish to become an enemy of his zone, and that he wanted to collaborate "because it's my zone" ("porque es mi zona") reflect the answers to my questions about why those who donate trophies, beer and prizes agree to do so: "they have to give" ("tienen que dar"). They are **obliged** to give what they can, because it is their zone, and because they are wealthy enough. Collaboration enables the demonstration and recognition of prestige and wealth, and also means a friendlier relationship with people around you. It is akin to the expectations that wealthy and successful politicians will give something back to those who have supported them. Collaboration in the fiesta is something more than a responsibility, a compulsory sacrifice and/or gift to the zone, particularly to El Señor de Exaltación, the patron saint. However, that obligation is matched by the fact that if all members of the zone have given well, in return El Señor usually looks after the zone, and therefore the individual *vecinos*.

Movement and experience

In this sub-section, I use a phenomenological approach to argue that during the actual fiesta, commitment to the zone is felt and constructed through movement. As Jane Cowan argues,

[P]articipating in the dance can provoke that sense of recognition – which though not inevitable is still by no means rare – that one is morally part of, just as one is now corporeally merged with, a larger collectivity, a recognition that, as a profoundly visceral knowledge, carries the force of absolute conviction. (Cowan 1990: 132)

Her theory is similar to older anthropological approaches to dance influenced by Durkheim, for example, Radcliffe-Brown's *The Andaman Islanders* (1922). He argued that dancing produced a subconscious feeling in individuals that one's personal value depended upon collective harmony. My focus here, drawing on much dance scholarship¹⁵, is on the experience of a performance itself, from the point of view of both audience and performer.¹⁶ Analysing music and dance performances in Bolivia has enabled Michelle Bigenho to develop what I find a useful concept of 'experiential authenticity', which refers to the fleeting feeling of sharing the experience of a performance with others, and thus becoming "root[ed] to places through bodily movement and the achievement of a performative 'oneness' ... with sonorous events and other people" (Bigenho 2001: 23).

I shall draw extensively on my personal experiences of 'experiential authenticity' while dancing and watching during the fiestas I attended, in order to demonstrate the importance of dance in the construction of a sense of community and citizenship. These experiences began with rehearsals, which can begin anything up to four months before the fiesta. The rehearsals I attended were generally a time to gather with friends and relatives, chat and practice dance steps. Those who were particularly confident or experienced decided on the steps and taught the rest of us. We followed, dancing in someone's courtyard for the *Morenada* or, in the case of the *Kullawada*, on the street outside the market. The *pasantes* circulated, distributing *trago*, which is burnt alcohol mixed with squash, and is drunk in small, shot-size, glassfuls, which are knocked back in one. During the evening, as the *tragos* begin to take effect, the dancing became easier and less embarrassing. Chewing coca helped to ward off fatigue. Although the basic steps are very simple and I am generally a reasonable dancer, the rhythms were unfamiliar to me, and difficult to grasp initially. Two years later, I find that my physical memory of the steps is almost entirely absent. My Bolivian friends had been listening to the music and dancing these particular rhythms all their lives¹⁷, and as a result, they slipped into the 'groove' of the music (Bigenho 2001) much quicker than I did. Some

¹⁵ For example, Sheets-Johnstone (1979), Horton Fraleigh (1987), Ness (1992), Thomas (1993) and Ram (2000).

¹⁶ Performance, and performativity (following Butler (1990)), has been an important theme of anthropological and sociological work on the body. See, for example, Turner (1984), Csordas (1994) and Burkitt (1999).

¹⁷ A three-year-old friend of mine used to dance Morenada very well.

people only came to a few rehearsals, some came to all; and levels of ability varied greatly among the dancers.

As people rested, they would chat with friends and family. This was particularly the case for women at the rehearsals for the Quilloma fiesta. They were mostly relatives, and many did not live in Rosas Pampa, so they enjoyed the opportunity to socialise collectively. Not all the women present at the rehearsals ended up dancing; and even if they did, the women decided not to have any particularly difficult special steps. They were all experienced *Morenada* dancers, so did not need much practice. The rehearsals were also the only opportunity to discuss practical arrangements: half-way through, and once everyone had arrived, the dancers would gather around the *pasante* to discuss quotas, costumes and travelling arrangements, and to collectively make any decisions necessary.

Dancing in the *Entradas* and *Dianas* themselves was amazing. Dancing at high altitude for 5-6 hours at a time was exhilarating, but also hot, tiring, and hard on my feet. The costumes for the *Entradas* were extremely difficult to dance in: I had to negotiate very high heels for the *Morenada* and a baby on my back (a doll) and a beaded hat, which was very heavy and didn't fit me, for the *Kullawada*. But my exhaustion, embarrassment and irritation with my costume were alleviated by the frequent stops for drinking beer and *tragos*; and it was, as my partner said, "a very proud experience" for both of us. By the time we reached the *palco* we were enjoying ourselves hugely. On the home straight, hundreds of people cheered us on, and at the *palco* the reception for the whole group was very enthusiastic.

[See Video Extracts 3 and 4]

The dancing affirms a sense of common belonging to the zone of Rosas Pampa, common status as members of a community. For me, the feeling of 'experiential authenticity', and some sort of (visceral knowledge of) common belonging, came through the physical experience of participating in a shared "affective culture", defined by Joann Kealinnohomoku as:

those cultural manifestations that implicitly and explicitly reflect the values of a given group of people through consciously devised means that arouse emotional responses and that strongly reinforce group identity.
(Kealinnohomoku 1979: 47)

The performers and spectators were in collusion in this, in contrast to the musicians, who came from outside the zone, and who were hired for the purpose of the fiesta. They were the experts, and they put on their own shows, moving in unison, twirling cymbals, and jumping. The distance between expert dancer and audience, such as in a stage-performance dance genre like ballet, was not relevant here. The boundaries between performers and spectators were blurred because the performers were the same people as the spectators; we all knew each other. More literally, *vecinos* lined the streets, and people, especially those who knew us, shouted encouragement, or brought us beer when we took breaks. I was pulled out by a student of mine and given a better shawl, my landlady tried to sort out my hat for me, and on a couple of occasions women I knew helped me by retying the *awayu* holding my 'baby', which kept falling out. As the dance scholar Sondra Horton Fraleigh (1987) points out, the body and self, and in particular the self in relation to others, are lived through dance precisely because of the relation between performer and audience in dance. The fiesta is being-in-the-world experienced as being-with-others through dance (Tamisari 2000).

Furthermore, the overall impression of the dancing is one of groups of people moving forward in uniformity. Everyone follows the people in front, and those at the head of the lines, the 'guides', are the ones who dictate when the group moves into rehearsed special steps. The movement is highly choreographed, and there is no improvisation other than the guides' decisions to begin the steps. Contrast this to dance styles such as salsa, where choreographed steps are used, but in an improvised order; or a ballet performance, where small units of movement are combined together in a fixed choreographed sequence (Cohen Bull 1997). In the former, the agency of the individual dancers is paramount, while in the latter, the choreographer has individual and primary agency. Bolivian brass-band dances like the *Morenada* are entirely different: a more diffuse agency rests in the collectivity, lead by the guides.¹⁸

¹⁸ See chapter 8 for further discussion of collective agency in relation to civic parades and political demonstrations.



Plate 6. Women *Morenada* dancers in the Rosas Pampa *Entrada* 2000

The aesthetics of the dances require conformity: stepping out of line or getting out of sequence breaks the flow and the overall impression of the performance.¹⁹ And those aesthetic values work on the spectators and the dancers. When rehearsing the *Kullawada*, I and my partner were keenly conscious of our difference, particularly since everybody seemed to be looking at us, to see how we would do. What made us stick out was in part the different way we moved, in part the fact that we were taller than the other dancers. I felt this sense of not belonging more acutely while rehearsing and dancing than under normal circumstances by that time, which was towards the end of my fieldwork. However, when I ignored that sensation, and relaxed into the movement, my sense of togetherness and coherence became very strong too. When all the dancers are moving in unison, the effect is quite breathtaking for the spectators and the participants.

Part of the mascot's job is to maintain this uniformity: we were told when we danced *Kullawada* that every so often we should circle the groups dancing behind us and

¹⁹ It can also be a bit embarrassing, although I have only really seen it in rehearsals. By the time of performance, dancers usually move together.

discipline the dancers if they made mistakes. Our authority was buttressed by our different costumes but also our ability to go against the general forward direction of the movement (by turning round to circle the group). Fortunately for us, we did not need to learn and keep to the special steps, although we rehearsed with all the other dancers; we were outside of the aesthetics of uniformity (and control) in this sense. This positioning gave us special responsibilities too: as we were approaching the end of the procession route, spectators kept shouting to us “more joy!” (“más alegría!”), encouraging me to smile and the both of us to move more expansively. Before and during rehearsals, we were told that our ‘joy’ was essential if we were to win the dance competition. This effervescence, in Durkheim’s sense, was not restricted to the dancers. During the fiesta, day-to-day living is put on hold for three days, and people can (and mostly do) enjoy themselves through dancing, watching dancing, and getting drunk, they are “reinvigorated by living, for a few moments, in a life that is less strained, and freer and easier” (Durkheim 1965 [1915]: 427). Ritual moments are a ‘bracketing off’ of normal time (Kertzer 1988), and moments to experience *communitas* (Turner 1969). Dancing serves many functions: from safety valve/catharsis, to a means of conflict, self-assertion or self-generation for society, from an organ of social control and education to (controlled) release from social norms (Peterson Royce 1977; Hanna 1979; Spencer 1985).

In Rosas Pampa, the function I wish to highlight is connected to the aesthetics of unity in forward motion, which map out people’s collective relationship to their zone. The *Entrada* creates a shared sense of identity through movement, and this sense of identity is intimately connected with place, as the dancers proceed through the zone. Moving through space thus constitutes the relationship of person to locality; and in this sense, the dancing of the *Entrada* reflects the highly spatial nature of the local terminology of citizenship, namely zone, *vecino* and *pueblo*, which I discussed in Chapter 2. Bigenho (2001) notes the importance of movement through space for rural areas, and contrasts this form of (physical) mapping, that marks out territory but focuses on central points, with the (paper) mapping of territory for bureaucratic purposes, focussed on boundaries and limits. In the Rosas Pampa fiesta, the route (the mapping) spirals in, from the outer reaches of the zone to the most important central public spaces, principally the football pitch.

Individual, community and space: distinctions

The overwhelming emphasis in anthropological literature on dance and ritual is one of drawing people together (Radcliffe Brown 1922; Lange 1975; Spencer 1985). Seemingly, the only way of avoiding being drawn together through dance is by non-participation. For example, Hans Buechler's work does much to examine the ways in which fiesta rituals generate information about social life, but implies that looking at fiestas as generative of social integration means that it is impossible to look at their expressive elements, a zero-sum choice. For him, the generation of information requires choice, and social control its absence; or at least the only choice is whether or not to participate (Buechler 1980). However, a more nuanced and porous vision of social integration than both of these is more appropriate. People experience as much or as little of the festivities as they want, and take from them many different meanings, some of which can reinforce senses of common belonging and social integration. Yet this is not the exclusive set of meanings expressed by the dancing. Aesthetics of conformity and uniformity notwithstanding, there are important distinctions between members of the community of Rosas Pampa, which are revealed and experienced during the fiesta. In contrast to the homogeneous community of Communitarian political theory, the ethnography in this section will demonstrate that even at the most intense time of collective effervescence individual *vecinos* experience their collective identity through distinctiveness and hierarchy. Hierarchy within the community is underlined throughout the festivities through, for example, the prominent position of the *Junta Vecinal* in leading the *Entrada* and then judging the dances, and through the forms in which the different dance groups are organised (Anze O 1995).²⁰ Gender and age distinctions are also expressed within the dances, as I discuss below.

The sonorous experience of the fiesta marked out membership of the general collectivity in a complex way. Since I was dancing at the front of our group, it was very hard to hear the band at the rear, and very easy to get confused with the band of the *comparsa* in front. The *pasantes* in front of me kept to their own rhythm, but were far enough out in front for that not to matter. I found myself torn between what I could hear from behind and what I could see in front of me. The sonorous distinction between dance groups is blurred for at least some of the dancers, as an effect of the

band bringing up the rear of the *comparsa*. For spectators, the impression is one of flows of sound going by, one after another, and each with a separate identity that is given physical shape by the dancers. Scholars have noted the importance of musical cacophony in rural highland fiestas in Bolivia (Bigenho 2001; Stobart 2002), and much the same can be said for the urban fiesta, at least from the spectators' point of view. In Rosas Pampa, after the *comparsas* had displayed their steps at the *palco* on the Saturday morning, they went to the football field and continued dancing to their bands, buying beers for each other and for the band. As in rural fiestas, the bands always played the same music, which became something of a theme tune.²¹ The impression for an observer is one of a territory being marked out by sound into distinct smaller spaces: as with pools of light, observers move from one pool of sound to another. But the inhabitants of each pool of sound are unaware of the others, not least because by this time they are drinking heavily. This is one metaphor for social relations in Rosas Pampa: distinct groups, although with blurred boundaries between them. These groups mediate the relationship between individuals and their zone – nested affiliations that are also evident in the organisation of the fiesta and the dance groups.

The *Junta Vecinal* share the organisation of the fiesta with the *preste* and the *pasantes*. Traditionally, being *preste* would mean being responsible for funding and organising nearly the entire fiesta, although in 2000, the *preste* organised a *comparsa* and paid for the main church service during the fiesta. *Pasantes* are the organisers of individual *comparsas*. They are usually a couple, but represented in organisational meetings by the man. The *Junta Vecinal's* role was essentially supervisory, and the fiestas were organised on the basis of who had participated in the previous year. Continuity was seen as very important, and from the outside the fiestas seemed almost to organise themselves. The Rosas Pampa *Junta Vecinal* knew who the *pasantes* should be, since they were chosen by the previous *pasantes* during the fiesta, and danced on the final day at the front of the group with red, yellow and green²² ribbons on their breasts. So, some weeks beforehand, the President of the *Junta Vecinal* went informally to the *pasantes* to check

²⁰ Michael Sallnow (1987) makes the point that festivities express distinctions, hierarchies and sometimes cleavages within communities, despite ideologies of *communitas* and egalitarian relations, and alongside the importance of fiestas in expressing community exclusiveness and solidarity.

²¹ In the community of Yura, in Northern Potosí, each of the four member *ayllus* plays a particular tune over and over again throughout the night of the fiestas, competing with each other for the right to circle a monument in the central square of the village (Bigenho 2001).

²² The colours of the Bolivian flag.

that they would be entering the fiesta; and asked the President of the *Junta Escolar* if the school would join in. The assumption was that every group that had danced in 1999 would dance in 2000, and the responsibility for getting them out on the streets fell to the *pasantes*.

The *pasantes* were responsible for convening people, and providing the drink and PA systems necessary for all the rehearsals, which were held on Sunday nights. They also contracted the band. Traditionally, the *pasantes* pay for the band, but in both *comparsas* in which I participated, each couple dancing paid a quota. We also paid for the hire of our costumes, but the *pasante* organised all this. At the time of the fiesta, the *pasantes* provide food and sometimes lodging (in the case of returning to the countryside) for the dancers. As Buechler argues, Bolivian urban and rural fiestas are ritual spaces for exchange relationships. Participation in fiestas is dependent upon insertion into particular kinship and social networks, and the bases of such social relationships are, in the ritual context, “various types of exchanges of alcohol, food, coca and cash” (1980: 13)²³. Dancing is also part of the exchange, in the sense that it should be reciprocated: if you have been *pasante*, in future years you are obliged to dance for those who danced for you (Buechler 1980).

There are two main types of networks that are mobilised for the purpose of organising dancing groups: kinship/friendship²⁴ and occupational. The main *comparsa*, i.e. that run by the overall *preste*, consisted of many of the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa, organised through friendship and kinship networks. The other *comparsas* were formed from occupational groups: the mechanics (see Map 3 for their district in Rosas Pampa) formed another *Morenada comparsa*. The third *comparsa*, who danced *Kullawada*, consisted of women who sold in the local market, along with their husbands; and the final *comparsa* was the school, whose pupils danced *Tinkus*.

But participation in the dancing does not automatically result from participation in the relevant set of social relationships. In 2000, there were rumours about problems with

²³ See also Anze O (1995) for a discussion of the role of reciprocity in the organization of urban fiestas. *Prestes* and *pasantes* often call on the fact that they have previously provided services (beer, for example) to relatives or friends in similar circumstances, and then expect those people to return the service. This arrangement is called *ayni*.

²⁴ Often the same thing because friends usually seal their friendship by instituting fictive kinship categories such as *compadrazgo* (Mintz and Wolf 1977; Wolf 1977).

the mechanics' *comparsa*, since the *pasante* had been somewhat arrogant when asking people to take part. He had announced that the quota for band and costume was 300 Bs and if they wanted to dance they could give him the money. There were mumbles that they could dance elsewhere if he was not prepared to ask them politely, actually to almost beg them to take part. Hans Buechler provides a detailed description of how *prestes* had to visit people, sometimes twice, bringing beer, cigarettes and coca, in order to invite them to participate (Buechler 1980: 179). In my experience, *pasantes* sent out invitations and told people where to attend rehearsals²⁵. Nonetheless, there is a reciprocal obligation to dance for people who danced for you, and a responsibility to help out family members by dancing for them. A number of people who danced with the market women's *comparsa* came from different zones in El Alto, but were related to the *pasantes*. The market women's union even resorted, it was rumoured, to fining people who would not participate.

Being *preste* or *pasante* is very expensive, and because of that brings status. Rubén, the *pasante* of the *Morenada* we took to Quilloma, estimated that he had spent about US\$800 in total. He is a student and a taxi driver, but told me later that he had done it because he was hoping to stand for Mayor of Quilloma at some point in the future, as I described in Chapter 3. He wished to get himself known there, and show that he was generous, relatively well-heeled, and prepared to give something to his *pueblo*. In rural areas, being *prestes* for community fiestas is part of a defined series of leadership positions that couples hold as they move up in society (Buechler 1980; Sallnow 1987; Abercrombie 1991). For example, in Itpa Chico, being *preste* for one particular fiesta was the most prestigious and final leadership position, after that of 'Jilaqata' (Carter and Mamani P 1989). Rosario Anze (1995) found a similar situation for urban zones in the southern part of El Alto, near to Rosas Pampa. As the comments over the mechanics' *comparsa* show, being *pasante* or *preste* requires an understanding of etiquette/cultural norms, and the ability to stay on good terms with kinsfolk and occupational associates;

²⁵ This is a complex issue. I was not quite a full partner in the sorts of exchange relationships that developed around dancing, so did not witness extended formal requests to dance. My neighbours asked me if I wanted to join in the *comparsa* we took to Quilloma in April 2000. They had received an invitation to rehearsals from the *pasante* (who was their nephew) and hosted one of the rehearsals. I just turned up one evening. For the Rosas Pampa fiesta later that year, people told me that I could dance with any *comparsa* I wanted, but I knew people in the school and the market better. Once I told friends who sold in the market that I was keen on dancing, the wife of one of the organisers told me where the rehearsals were, and what were the quotas, and my partner and I went along. In both instances, the *pasantes* ensured

it is a delicate and responsible position. As Rubén told me, “it’s difficult to get people together” (“difícil es reunir a la gente”), and he relied very much upon the support of his parents²⁶, particularly since, unusually for a *pasante*, he was unmarried.

The connections between political authority and having been *preste* or *pasante* are a further example of the overlapping of formal politics and ritual obligations, an overlapping similarly testified to by the importance of the *Junta Vecinal* in fiesta organisation. The structure and organisation of the dancing in the fiesta reveals something about how individuals relate to their community, in that their membership is mediated by membership in a corporate entity, such as mechanics, the school, the market, or a particular kin group. Citizenship here is a multi-tiered construct (Yuval-Davis 1997), of membership in various collectivities that nest and overlap.

Reading the signs of the dancing: The Morenada

The experience of the distinctions within the collectivity also rests upon shared cultural competence in reading the signs of the dances. As with any other symbolic activity, the symbolic dimensions of the dances not only reflect differences, but also constitute them. Structuralist dance anthropologists saw dance as language (Spencer 1985) (Peterson Royce 1977; Hanna 1979; Williams 1996), and Adrienne Kaeppler has argued that dance performers and audiences need shared levels of linguistic competence (in the Chomskyan sense) in the language of movement in order to be able to ‘decode’ movements (1995). However, any attempt to do this will necessarily be partial, since the meanings of dances can exceed the limits of verbal language (Thomas 1993). And in a sense, this is how it should be: the meanings should be just beyond the grasp of words; as Isadora Duncan said, “If I could tell you what it meant, there would be no point in dancing it” (quoted in Peterson Royce 1977: 155). Thus recognising the partiality of my account, I read the signification of the dances through costume and movement, although any significations are dependent upon context. I look here at two main forms of distinction, and illustrate them with the example of the *Morenada*.

According to Antonio Paredes-Candia (1984), the ‘dance of the *Morenos*’ is first mentioned in an article published in the La Paz Geographical Society Magazine in 1898.

that I received a formal invitation to participate in the fiesta, and also expressed their gratitude to us for agreeing to dance.

The oldest *Morenada* group that still dances in the Oruro Carnival dates from 1913. Elssa Paredes de Salazar (1976) argues that the *Morenada* arose in the first years of Independence. She maintains that the *Morenada* is about the experiences of Afro-Bolivians in wine presses in the region of the Yungas. Brought over from Africa during colonial times to work in the mines of Potosí, the slaves were unable to acclimatise to the hard work and cold weather of the mining region, so were moved to the warmer regions of the Yungas. The movements of the dance mimic the movements of grape pressing. Other commentators think that the dance refers to the journey that slaves took to the mines of Potosí from Central America (Rocha n.d.), while the website of one of the *Morenada* fraternities of the Oruro Carnival describes it as about both the mines and the wine presses.²⁷ Still other authors maintain that it originated in the *altiplano* village of Taraco, near lake Titicaca (Asociacion de Conjuntos Folkloricos del Gran Poder 1999). Everyone agrees, though, that the *Morenada* is about the African slaves, and the name '*moreno*' refers to people of dark skin. It is traditionally the backbone of the fiesta in La Paz of the Señor del Gran Poder, the zonal fiesta of the commercial zone of Chijini in La Paz.

[See Video Extract 5]

i) Cost, prestige and status

In Rosas Pampa, the *Morenada* was generally agreed to be the most prestigious dance of all. Its prestige derives, according to informants, from the expense involved, either for the dancers or for the organisers. Bands who play *Morenada* charge more for their time than the others; and the men's costumes are the most elaborate and cost the most to hire (see also Buechler 1980). Perhaps more importantly nowadays, the women dancing *Morenada* need to buy new outfits, consisting of *pollera*, shoes, and shawl, and a different set for the *Diana* the following day. The *polleras* worn by members of a *comparsa* should ideally be of matching material. The whole ensemble could cost around US \$300. When dancing, the women wear their best and most expensive gold earrings and brooches. In

²⁶ Who, ironically, are Evangelicals. I discuss their case and the Evangelical view of dancing in the following chapter.

²⁷ Interestingly, the official website of the 2001 Oruro Carnival divides the dances into 'traditional' and 'popular' dances, where the latter category seems to refer to dances that have been created, rather than drawing on autochthonous Andean traditions. The *Morenada* appears in the 'popular' category.

<http://www.acfo.org.bo/carnaval.html>. The distinctions are as follows:

Tradicional: Diablada, Cullaguada, Llamera, Tinkus, Pujllay, Kallawayaya, Incas, Tobas, Negro o Tundiques, Kantus, Tarqueadas, Zamponeros.

Populares: Morenada, Caporales, Ahuatiris, Surisicuris, Wititis, Doctorcitos.

The website does not say on what basis the distinctions are made.

their new *polleras* and shawls, and dripping with gold, the *Morenada* dancers underline their commercial success (as *cholitas*²⁸), perhaps a reason for the popularity of the *Morenada* during the *Entrada* of Gran Poder.

Originally, in fact, the *Morenada* was only danced by men, even in the early 1970s (Buechler 1980; Asociacion de Conjuntos Folkloricos del Gran Poder 1999), and their costumes are certainly the most spectacular (see Plate 7, next page). A consistent feature of the *Morenada* dance has been the *matracas*, or rattles, that the dancers, particularly the men, carry. The *matracas* used to be fishes, or armadillos, but now often indicate the dancers' profession or affiliation; for example, taxi drivers will have taxis, or groups of *vecinos* might have *matracas* shaped like beer bottles. In the *Entrada* of Gran Poder in 2000, the men of the *comparsa* from the market of Eloy Salmón carried *matracas* shaped like stereo players, because the Eloy Salmón market is where black market electrical goods are to be found in La Paz.

The migrants from Quilloma would not consider dancing anything other than the *Morenada* when going back to the Quilloma fiesta: it enabled them to say to their *pueblo* that, although things in the city might be tough they could at least afford to dance the *Morenada*. Their willingness to spend is a mixture of snobbishness and respect – they wouldn't be cheap when it came to their *pueblo*, but it also says that they have made a success of the migration to the city. Such motives are, however, expressed as obligation, or necessity: when we returned from Quilloma on the bus, the men sang raucously

“You have to dance Morenada
Once a year;
Even though it's hard for us to pay
What will we take with us
When we die?
Cholita paceña.”

 (“hay que bailar Moreno,
al año una vez,
aunque nos cueste pagar
Que cosa vamos a llevar,
Cuando nos vamos a morir?
Cholita paceña”)

²⁸ The costume described is that of *chola* women, although (of course) of the best quality that they own. As I described in Chapter 1, *Chola* dress bespeaks commercial success and status, because even those *polleras* and shawls that are worn on a day-to-day basis are very much more expensive than Western clothing (Buechler and Buechler 1996; Salazar de la Torre 1999; Weismantel 2001).



Plate 7. Male *Morenada* dancers in the Quilloma *Entrada* 2000. Shows costumes, although they are not wearing their masks

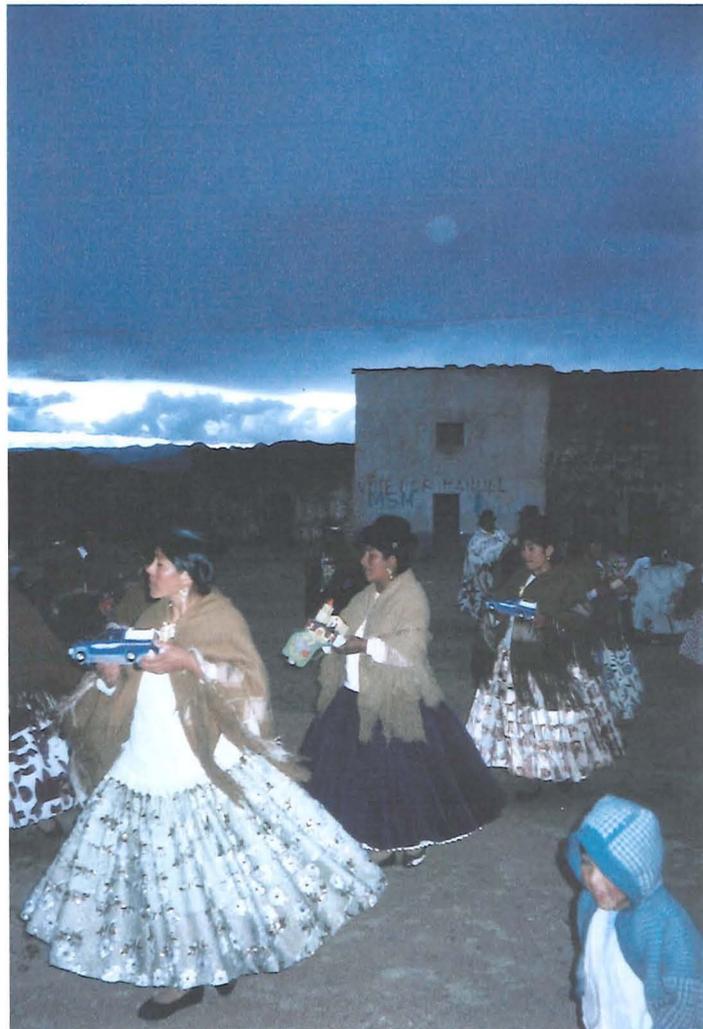


Plate 8. Women *Morenada* dancers in the Quilloma *Entrada* 2000. Shows their *matracas*. They wore matching polleras for the *Diana*, because the *Entrada* began late.

ii) Adulthood, dignity and gender

The *Morenada* is meant to be danced by older married people, such as the group who went back to Quilloma to dance. It is specifically a very dignified, adult, dance. However, when younger people dance *Morenada*, in the Oruro Carnival or the *Entrada Universitaria*, the boys' movements are much more athletic than the older men's, involving more elaborate jumping and twisting; while the girls dance in flirty '*mini-polleras*' instead of the full skirt worn by the older women, a fact commented upon with disapproval by one of my friends. The issue of dignity addressed here is not only about different aged women wearing different clothes, but also about the ethnicity of the dancers. With her snorts of disapproval at the short skirts, my friend expressed a view that *mestiza* women are more flirtatious and less dignified than stately *chola* women, who move in a more measured fashion and wear more 'appropriate' clothes.²⁹ This short example shows that understandings of age, ethnicity and gender influence and reveal readings of signs in the 'cultural artefacts' of fiesta dance events (Cowan 1990) (Kaeppler 1978).

The *Morenada comparsa* has both corporate groups of dancers doing the same steps and several mascots at the very front, or at the front of a subgroup. When we went to Quilloma, I danced at the front as *china*.³⁰ I was able to hire my costume, which meant that I didn't have to go to the expense of buying a *pollera*, etc. My costume consisted of high-heeled thigh-high boots, a *mini-pollera*, and a matching top, all in black and gold. The ensemble was topped off with a gold bowler hat with a feather in it. The part of *china* is one usually played by young single women (although traditionally it was played by cross-dressing men), who dance coquettishly at the front of the *comparsa*. Being not fully adult yet, they are not part of the well-heeled collectivity who process in dignity behind them.

²⁹ My friend's attitudes are reminiscent of Silvia Rivera's study of categories of femininity in Bolivia (1996), when she describes the 'birlocha' – a derogatory term usually used by *cholitas* about indigenous women who dress in Western clothes (*de vestido*). I did not hear the term used often, but when it is used, it has similar connotations (of sexual license) to the word 'slut' in English.

³⁰ *China Supay* is a devil that dances in the *Diablada*; but '*china/chino*' is also slang for very drunk. I was unable to get people to explain to me exactly what the *china* was, other than being the flirty girls who dance at the front. Elsewhere in Latin America, '*china*' means a woman or a girl, and the diminutive '*chinita*' denotes affection. In Argentina, '*china*' refers to rural women (Victoria Goddard, personal communication).

The contrast between mature woman *Morenada* dancer and *china* figure is not only one of costume; movement is also very important.³¹ The *Morenada* is a very dignified and stately dance. When married women dance *Morenada*, they tend to stick to the basic dance step, with only a few elaborated special steps. The basic step moves forwards, with steps to each side, but women's movement is focussed upon swishing their luxuriant skirts, so they emphasise the swing to each side with their hips moving in an almost horizontal plane, while they face forwards for most of the time. The Quilloma women had two special steps, one of which was based on the basic step, and involved turning to the front, left, back and right, to come back to facing forwards and proceeding along their route with the basic step. Women also carry *matracas* (smaller than the men's), which they operate in time to the steps and the music. Their posture is very contained: limb movement is kept to a minimum, as if it were within a cocoon around each person, and they do not move their heads a great deal, although there is no stiffness. There is no sense of abandonment in limb or head movement, even when the women become very drunk, but there is a sense of flow, elegance, control, and reserve.³² The cliché that they look like fleets of galleons processing along the sea is actually rather accurate. I was told that the *Morenada* was easy for women to do, because it does not require much physical exertion.

The *china* dance is simpler. I was told that I only had to do one step, although I have seen *chinas* dancing several special steps. Their movement is more chopped than the older women's swishing from side to side; with the smaller skirt comes a smaller range of movement for the arms and legs, and the hips are supposed to swing from side to side in the vertical plane, rather than swinging around in the horizontal plane, as with the older women. All this gives the impression of prim and haughty coquettishness.

My partner had not arrived in Bolivia when I began rehearsing for the Quilloma *Morenada*, although he was present at the actual fiesta. This made it possible for me to dance as a single girl. However, by the time rehearsals began for the Rosas Pampa fiesta

³¹ Jane Cowan (1990) shows how movements in dance reflect and constitute 'gendered dispositions' in Northern Greece; Zoila Mendoza (1998) demonstrates something similar for race/ethnicity in Andean Peru.

³² Frank Hall has investigated the importance of posture in solo Irish dancing. The restriction of movement of the upper body has resulted, he argues, from a complex interplay of the context of Irish nationalist competition, teaching and adjudication, and cultural beliefs about control and manners, 'good bearing' (1996).

a few months later, I had managed to persuade him to join me in dancing. As participants in the *Kullawada comparsa* in Rosas Pampa, we also danced as mascots, but as a couple. He was the Waphuri, while I was the Awila, a grandmother. The Waphuri is supposed to direct the movement of the dance (Paredes de Salazar 1976; Asociacion de Conjuntos Folkloricos del Gran Poder 1999; Rocha n.d.). He wears a (very heavy) mask, with a big nose, and hat, plus a hired shirt, belt and trousers. He brandishes a large spindle, which was, apparently, extremely heavy; while I wore a smaller hat, a blouse, and carried a 'baby'. My *pollera* this time was that of an adult woman³³: through dancing with my partner/husband³⁴, I had matured from a flirty *china* to an adult woman with a baby.³⁵



Plate 9. The Kullawada of the Rosas Pampa Entrada 2000, with Awila and Waphuri at the front

What is important here is the fact that it is very unusual to dance alone: in theory, even *chinas* should dance with others out in the front of the group. The wives of the male mascots dance with the other married women. Dancing these days is something that is

³³ Although the *Kullawada* dancers all agreed to buy matching *polleras*, I was able to borrow one in a similar colour scheme.

³⁴ People in long-term relationships (cohabiting) tended to call their partners 'husband' or 'wife', even if they had not officially married, so we followed this convention.

³⁵ I don't know how the baby, or the *alegría* I was supposed to demonstrate, squares with being a grandmother, but that is what I was told, and Rocha (n.d.) also talks of the Awila, or *vieja* (old woman) as mascot in the *Kullawada*.

meant to be done as part of a heterosexual couple, particularly for the mature dances such as the *Morenada* and the *Kullawada*. In other dances, such as *Caporales*, *Tobas*, or *Tinkus*, which are mostly danced by younger people (because they are very athletic), gender roles are not as tightly circumscribed in this way: for instance, I have seen women dancing male *Caporales* dances, even in small *Entradas* such as that in Santiago II.³⁶ The *pasantes* also should usually be married, and if not, as was the case for Rubén, they need to be accompanied by a female relative for the dancing, and also to organize the food, drink and accommodation for the *comparsas*. In Rubén's case, it was his mother who filled this role. This requirement, of the necessity of some form of male-female couple to hold leadership positions, is similar to Aymara requirements for political office-holding, as numerous ethnographies have shown (e.g. see Harris 2000 [1978]). Sponsorship of dances occurs at particular stages of individuals' life cycles, and in this sense, public fiestas are also individual rites of passage (Buechler 1980). As I argue in Chapter 6, full selfhood for adults is dependent upon being part of a stable heterosexual couple, and this has implications for various citizenship and political practices, including, in this case, dance.

Dance and Bolivian identity

Understanding the nested nature of the affiliations of citizens of Rosas Pampa requires an extension of our analysis to a further level. By holding an *Entrada*, *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa express a national sensibility as well as the very localist one described above. Dance is central to Bolivianness for Bolivians of all social classes. One *vecino* of Rosas Pampa told me that 'we Bolivians are *thuquñas* (dancers)', using the Aymara word for one who dances. Dance and alcohol are also used to explain Bolivia's underdevelopment: I was often told that Bolivians have too many fiestas, and drink too much, and this is why the country has not progressed. The dances included in the *Entrada* demonstrate national belonging as well as enacting local belonging. As well as being influenced by rural fiestas, in many ways the Rosas Pampa and Quilloma *Entradas* discussed in this chapter mimic, or refer to, the very famous city-based national *Entradas*, particularly those of the Oruro Carnival and the Gran Poder festivities in La Paz (Anze O 1995). An examination of that 'citation' through dance reveals the

³⁶ The male role in *Caporales* looks much more fun, and exuberant. The girls in *Caporales comparsas* seem to be there mainly in order to look pretty and wear *very* short skirts. They don't jump as much as the men

ambivalence of Rosas Pampa *vecinos*' positions in the national chain of belonging, and the ambiguities of being a 'cholo citizen'.

As the previous sections on the *Morenada* showed, informants from Rosas Pampa primarily viewed the *Morenada* as a prestigious dance that was expensive to participate in. No one told me that it was about African slaves, until I spoke to a costume-maker in La Paz, and read the leaflets, books and websites I have referred to earlier for explanations of the symbolisms. One of those describes the *Morenada* as follows, highlighting its political nature:

The *Morenada*. Dance of African origin, introduced into the country in the colonial epoch, when the blacks were used instead of *mitayos* [Indians working as part of their obligatory labour quota], in domestic tasks in the mines of Oruro and Potosí. ... Defining the *Morenada* as a folkloric demonstration of protest against the colonial epoch, the importing of black slaves, the unjust and inhumane treatment to which they were subject in the mines and vineyards. Their *matraca* signifies the crunching sound made by the dragging of the oppressive chains.³⁷

Whether or not this is historically accurate, I doubt that it was fully appreciated by the Rosas Pampa dancers. But through the very fact of dancing dances that come from specific regions of Bolivia, *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa were emphasising their belonging not only to Rosas Pampa, but also to Bolivia. This would have been evident to them through the names, and through what they learned about these dances in schools, even if they did not consider themselves authoritative enough to pass on this knowledge to me, or if they thought such references were too obvious to merit mention. For example, the *Morenada* refers to the 'Morenos', certainly understood as Africans. Other dances danced in Rosas Pampa are similarly region-specific: *Tobas* refers to indigenous groups of the Eastern lowlands of Bolivia and *Tinkus* is a dance that derives supposedly from the famous tinku fights in Northern Potosí.³⁸ Dancing each dance enacts a Bolivianness that is composed of multiple regional and ethnic identities; and dancing 'cross-culturally', as the urban Aymara do when they mimic indigenous peoples from the Eastern lowlands or tinku fighters from Northern Potosí, simultaneously reinforces and breaks down those identifications.

do.

³⁷ <http://www.acfo.org.bo/carnaval.html>

³⁸ For ethnography of the tinku fight, see (Harris 1994), or, for the tinkuy in Peru, (Sallnow 1987).

National *Entradas* have grown at a remarkable rate in recent years, giving the lie to the evolutionary ideas that dance rituals would disappear as societies became more modern and social disintegration more marked (Lange 1975). Recent revivals in European rituals also demonstrate the falsity of such a supposition, and the increasing prominence of local or sectoral identities in contemporary society (Boissevain 1992). The first *Entrada* of Gran Poder was held only in 1966, and the *Entrada Universitaria* is even newer, having been instituted in 1988. The Oruro Carnival has a longer history, having taken many forms throughout pre-colonial and colonial times. The oldest 'folkloric' dance associations which participate in the *Entrada* each year date from the beginning of the 20th Century, but most were formed in the 1970s and 1980s.³⁹ In February 2000, radio programmes reported that the Bolivian government was proposing the Oruro Carnival for the first round of UNESCO proclamations of "Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity"; and by 2001, it had succeeded in this aim.⁴⁰ The *Entradas* are all televised, and attract large audiences of Bolivians of all classes.

Beer companies prominently sponsor the big dance festivities, and use images of dancers to illustrate Bolivian identity in their advertisements. For example, the beer company *Paceña*, which is from La Paz, brought out a TV advert in 2000 which showed a dance company dancing *Tinkus* on the salt lake in Uyuni, which is between the city of Potosí and the Chilean border. Such a combination of localised images (La Paz beer plus Northern Potosí dance plus national tourist site) to create a national sensibility

³⁹ Formation of dance associations that participated in 2001: 1900-1949: 9; 1950-1969: 7; 1970-1979: 14; 1980-1989: 10; 1990+: 2. <http://www.acfo.org.bo/carnaval.html>. Presumably a number of the older associations have ceased to function. General Banzer encouraged the Gran Poder *Entrada* in its early years by attending in the early 1970s. The role of the nationalist military governments in encouraging 'folkloric' production in Bolivia would bear further research. Thomas Turino (1991) demonstrates the importance of the nationalist de facto government of General Juan Velasco Alvarado for raising the national profile of Andean music in Peru.

⁴⁰ UNESCO's website describes this accolade as follows:

"An international distinction has been created by UNESCO to honour the most remarkable examples of cultural spaces (defined as a place in which popular and traditional cultural activities are concentrated or as the time usually chosen for some regularly occurring event) or forms of popular and traditional expression such as languages, oral literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, costumes, craftwork, architecture and other arts as well as traditional forms of communication and information.

The aim of the project is to encourage governments, NGOs and local communities to take the lead in identifying, preserving and drawing attention to their oral and intangible heritage. Contributions by individuals, groups and institutions to the systematic preservation of this heritage will also be encouraged."

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/heritage/intangible/index.shtml>

creates an almost exact commercial reflection of the 'pluri-multi' approach to Bolivian identity of the 1990s: no longer Creolised and integrationist, but one of unity in diversity. However, it also draws on more assimilationist forms of Bolivian citizenship processes, in particular in the 'folkloricisation' of dance culture. In this logic, dances can be celebrated, but must be bracketed off from 'normal' Bolivian time, rather like ritual time is bracketed off.

Contemporary Bolivian media tends to present the famous *Entradas* as tourist attractions, something exotic and colourful – 'folkloric' remnants of an indigenous past. The Bolivian government and, at one remove, UNESCO, encourage such an interpretation, through for example the declaration of the Oruro Carnival as a "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity". As Thomas Abercrombie argues with regard to Oruro, the *Entrada* is a way in which city people can exorcise and domesticate the Indian within them:

The imagined Indian who is briefly lionized in carnival costume is not the contemporary professed-Christian type who lives in places like K'ulta [a *pueblo* in the Department of Oruro], but an Indian from the past, one whose religion is dedicated entirely to underworld beings like those that Oruro's Virgin conquered, in myth, and domesticates, in pantomime, at carnival's end. Orureños' creation of their "masqued" images of suppressed past identities, forms but a prelude to the resuppression of such identities in the abnegations of Lent. ...

Like rural dwellers who call upon the dead and *Chullpa* forces to aid them in production, only to exile them once again, city people do likewise with the Indian within them, externalised in dance as a form of personal sacrifice, and then dutifully "re-repressed". (Abercrombie 1991: 119-120)

The Oruro Carnival is described on the website of the Asociación de Conjuntos del Folklore-Oruro as

A cultural, popular and traditional expression of exceptional value, from the point of view of philosophy, history, economics, anthropology, linguistics, sociology, artistic and literary. It is in short the result of the creative genius of man, individually and collectively, that demonstrates a profound rooting in a society of cultural tradition belonging to the communities that are descendents of the ancient, prehistoric civilizations of the Andes.⁴¹

History, especially pre-colonial history and the history of resistance during the colonial period, is mobilised by intellectuals to make claims for the cultural importance of dances like the *Morenada*. But an unfortunate side-effect of this mobilisation of history is that the dances are taken out of the present time – they become exotic, traditional, a

⁴¹ <http://www.acfo.org.bo/carnaval.html>

“folkloric demonstration of protest against the colonial epoch” (from the quote earlier in this section; my emphasis). Clearly, these processes can work the other way, highlighting the ways in which the colonial epoch is reflected or perpetuated in modern times. But there is a danger of weakening the power of such claims through ‘folkloricisation’. And the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa partake of that ‘folkloricisation’, for example through learning (and teaching) dances in school as folkloric and somehow ‘out of time’ or in the past rather than something contemporary.⁴² This runs the risk of creating a form of ethnic consciousness that Blanca Muratorio aptly terms an “alienated folkloric consciousness” (1980: 51).

The development of an alienated folkloric consciousness fits in well with assimilationist citizenship projects, as a book on Bolivian dances published in 1976 demonstrates. The author, Elssa Paredes de Salazar, connected the issues of dance and dress, arguing forcefully that national integration and development in Bolivia required that women give up the *pollera* for westernised clothes.⁴³ Attachment to the *pollera*, she felt, was over-sentimental and retarded Bolivia’s progress; and changing out of traditional clothes would remove racial discrimination.⁴⁴ The proper place for traditional clothes, in her opinion, was the fiesta, which would become “a remembrance of a traditional and romantic past which is, each time, receding further and further into the distance”; and the Oruro Carnival is a good example of this, “really a folkloric fiesta where typical costumes are exhibited” (Paredes de Salazar 1976: 32).

Conclusion

Yet, as this chapter has shown, the fiesta is much more than an exhibition of dance and costume, rather it is a central part of the annual cycle of modern Bolivian communities. When *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa dance the *Morenada* or *Kullawada* in their *Entradas* they are

⁴² I discuss this in chapter 8, where I also give the example of a schoolteacher who wanted students to learn ‘autochthonous dances’, which he could only teach with the aid of a book. The students’ parents would probably have known many of the dances, and the children may even have danced them themselves on trips to their *pueblos*.

⁴³ She argued against the *pollera* on the basis of hygiene, the fact that it was imposed by the Spanish during colonial times and is therefore not ‘traditional’, and also because it prevents women from getting educated because educational institutions discriminate against women wearing *polleras*.

⁴⁴ Clothing is at the same time cause and effect of discrimination, which will create an aggressive social explosion because of the series of prejudices that it provokes, and which denies the peasants the benefits of civilisation, marginalizing them from a positive national integration, something which, if it doesn’t retard national progress, at the very least delays it. (Paredes de Salazar 1976: 19)

asserting their collective belonging to the nation of Bolivia as *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa. They cite **both** the 'folkloric' national *Entradas* **and** rural fiestas that they either remember from their childhood or continue to participate in when they visit their *pueblos*. Dancing is an ambivalent activity in this sense, and the Rosas Pampa fiesta partakes of this ambivalence. Having said that, dance is experienced during the local fiesta 'in context'; and the 'bracketing off' of ritual time takes place within an identifiable community. Furthermore, the fiesta is also great fun, the dangers of 'folkloricisation' notwithstanding.

I argue throughout this thesis that to be a *cholo* citizen is to be part of a zone, and in some ways the fiesta can be seen as a metaphor for the zone, a means for individuals to define and physically experience the collectivity. Local politics are intimately connected to the fiesta. The route of the *Entradas* maps the territory of the zone, spiralling in from its boundaries to its centre (the football pitch) and asserting the *vecinos'* relationship to place. The collectivity symbolically takes in the whole zone during the procession, but breaks up into small groups once the dancers have displayed their steps to the judges. Citizenship of the 'imagined community' of the zone is dependent upon insertion into smaller 'face-to-face' communities/networks, marked out by sound, movement and costume. The importance of networks that underpin *vecindad* in Rosas Pampa is also reflected in the organisation of the fiesta into *comparsas* that consist of kin or occupational networks. On a more individual level, the dances reveal much about the nature of *cholo* personhood, specifically adulthood, with their stress on dignity of movement, the heterosexual couple and conspicuous consumption. If dance is a citizenship practice, then the citizenship here is not an abstract status or category of belonging, but concrete, physical and embodied, involving a sense of collectivity which includes a common relationship to place, but which cannot be taken for granted.

CHAPTER 5

'HOW THE GODS TOUCH HUMANS'¹ (AND VICE VERSA)

This chapter continues the story of the construction of community and a sense of collectivity in Rosas Pampa, moving into a consideration of how the forms of sociality modelled and mediated by religion impact upon citizenship. As such it constitutes a bridge between the two parts of this thesis and begins to focus explicitly upon citizenship as projects of personhood. The first section elaborates upon models of sociality and the self provided and reflected by what Olivia Harris (n.d.) has called 'colonial Catholicism', focussing in particular on the importance of the body and ingestion in the fiesta and popular religious rites. The second section counterposes this with the Evangelical 'anti-community' constructed in opposition to colonial Catholicism. The latter project is a modernising one, which relies upon a clear distinction between the public and the private, and a correspondingly bounded notion of the individual self. It involves quite a lot of work on the self and the body for Evangelicals, and can lead to fractures between residents of Rosas Pampa. Evangelicalism is the first example of a modernising project of personhood that I explore in this thesis. However, it is only partially successful, not least because in fact it relies upon the inability of people to conform entirely to that absolutist version of personhood. Perhaps fortunately, the investment in Evangelism is never quite as complete as the missionaries themselves say they would like, and the model of citizenship promoted by them is constantly undermined by ordinary people's flexible and hybrid approach to the sacred.

Colonial Catholicism: the fiesta, alcohol, and the sacred

In Chapter 4 I looked at what is probably the most intense and explicit expression of community in Rosas Pampa, the annual fiesta. I argued that there is a compulsory quality to the fiesta celebrations, coupled with a sense of euphoria and pride in the wellbeing of the zone. Yet even this moment of collective effervescence needs to be unpicked as I indicated, since it simultaneously provides scope for the expression of difference, of discord and of competition (quite apart from those who refuse to participate at all). In this section I shall discuss other aspects of religious worship – the elements that have typically been associated with the construction and reproduction of community by

Andean ethnographers – in order to explore ethnographically how ‘community’ operates on a day-to-day basis. As we shall see, there are many shared values which link the migrants of Rosas Pampa to their *pueblos*, and express a similar sense of the sources of power that ensure their collective wellbeing. In turn, these inform the *vecinos*’ understandings of their relationship to each other and to the zone.

Devotion and dancing

As well as being a social rite of community, the fiesta is, of course, a religious ritual, and the community thereby experienced as sacred. Fiestas are about honouring the *pueblo* or zone’s Saint through dancing and gaining his/her blessing for individuals and the collectivity for the coming year. This religiosity is very linked to the consumption of alcohol. Prior to September, both *Morenadas* in Rosas Pampa held Catholic Masses to inaugurate their rehearsal periods. In one, four months before the fiesta, the priest reminded the dancers that they were dancing for devotion, not just to get drunk, and proceeded to deliver a sermon about how people should better their lives. Part of this included a discourse on relations between husband and wife, stressing communication and the sharing of domestic tasks, a noteworthy point given the frequent connection between drunkenness and domestic violence (Harvey 1994, 1994b; Harris 2000 [1978]). Many more people went to the dancing and drinking in the churchyard after the Mass, but a good 40 or so adults attended the service (the most I ever saw in that church during many visits over the year).

The debates that surfaced about dancing *Kullawada* well illustrate the role of devotion and spirituality in dancing. When I started telling friends that we were going to dance *Kullawada*, a number tried to discourage me, because *Kullawada* is notoriously *khincha* (bad luck). I heard that the *pasantes* were having trouble getting people to dance, and had had to threaten fines. When I asked why the *Kullawada* was *khincha*, people told me that couples who dance *Kullawada* will subsequently separate, and I was told of a number of incidents where this had happened. On the other hand, the women who wanted me to dance had a number of responses to this basic objection. One said that the problem was for single people “but you already have your husband already, don’t you? Single women [*cholitas*] might get carried off, but you’ll be carried off by your husband, so you’ll be fine!” (“pero vos ya tienes tu esposo, ¿no? Se puede llevar las cholitas, pero tu esposo te

¹ The title of this chapter paraphrases Sabine MacCormack (1991).

va a llevar a ti, entonces vas a estar bien!”). More frequently, though, people said things along the lines of Doña Betty’s response: “That’s something from the past, you shouldn’t believe that” (“Eso es de los abuelos, no hay que creer eso”).

One of the *pasantes* said: “The others didn’t want [to dance *Kullawada*], its *kbhincha*, they say, but I organised it in the *campo* and did it do me any harm? In fact it brought me money” (“Otros no querían, *kbhincha* es dicen, pero yo he pasado en el campo y ¿acaso me ha pasado algo? Más bien me ha traído dinero”). Her husband said that we were dancing for El Señor, and that this would over-ride any bad effects from such “superstitions”, or beliefs “like in Satan, in the devils”. In general, they all thought that if I did not believe in the ‘superstition’, then there would be no problem. One woman shopkeeper said to me: “Well, it might happen for these *warmis*, but not for you – you’re not dancing for devotion, are you?” (“Ja, a esas *warmis* puede pasar, pero para vos no, ¿acaso estas bailando por devoción?”). *Warmi* is Aymara for woman, and she was, somewhat dismissively, attributing the effects of the belief only to ignorant Aymara peasant women. In any case, since I was dancing for fun rather than faith, she thought I would be safe from any possible ill effects.²

The nature of devotion in dancing was of course very important, as the centrality of the Saint’s images and devotional Masses to the festivities show. However, there were disputes about the exact obligations of dancers. Although not strictly appropriate, it was acceptable to dance purely for fun, particularly for me as *gringa* (foreigner), and fun and enjoyment were seen as central to devotion itself. My status as non-believer did not prohibit me from dancing, and may indeed help me avoid the effects of bad luck. Nonetheless, the sacrifice of dancing usually illustrates and enacts one’s devotion, which is viewed as active, and requires constant reiteration. One is supposed to dance for the saint three times in a row (Bigenho 2001): one person told me that I should dance three times for Santiago in Quilloma or I would have bad luck.³

However, the actual object of devotion was rather less clear to me. For some people, the devotion was focussed on the actual icon of the Señor de Exaltación carried at the head

² I was at the time anxious about these possibilities, but I did not know people in any of the *Morenada comparsas*, and I wanted a more ‘authentic’ experience than dancing with the school, so I decided to risk it. I felt that I would be protected a bit by my foreign status, and my partner agreed.

of the procession during the *Entrada*, and worshipped during the Masses on the Friday and Saturday. For others, such as the *pasante*, the devotion he felt was to Jesus Himself, as abstraction, a conception akin to the Evangelical Protestant notion of Jesus.⁴ He viewed as superstitious those people who had warned me against the *Kullawada*. For them, the dance itself was an object, or at least had the power to bring risk. His wife saw the *Kullawada* in a similar way to this, but as having the power to bring luck, when she argued that it had actually brought her money. Others agreed that although the dance might bring bad luck, the belief would only have power over me if I believed in it myself. Thus, religious belief, although strong, cannot be assumed to be constant and unquestionable. Even the best-established and most explicitly devotional elements of the fiesta are subject to debate, scrutiny and doubt.

Alcohol – sociality – spirituality

As the previous chapter hints, alcohol was central to my personal experience of dancing in the fiestas. In this sub-section, I discuss it explicitly, in order to demonstrate that it is a very important force for creating a sense of community between *vecinos*. At rehearsals, the organisers circulated with jugs of *trago*, on the understanding that it would make all of us dance.⁵ During the *Entradas* and the *Dianas*, we took frequent breaks to drink; and after they were finished, we drank and danced with our *comparsa* in the football pitch. In Quilloma, we drank for three days. Fiestas are movement, costumes, applause, dust, exhaustion, devotion; but it will be clear from the descriptions in the previous chapter that drinking alcohol plays just as crucial a role in fiestas as all of these. Of course, not everyone drinks, and the second half of this chapter deals with a large group of people who don't, but all the dancers and band members, and the majority of the audience do. When we arrived in Quilloma, we were met by a lorry filled with beer crates. We drank at least half of that truck, but Quilloma itself must have a maximum of 100 families, and most of the drinking was done by the 50 or so couples who went there to dance, plus about 10 local residents. Some people drank for three days, to rather alarming states of inebriation. Most sloped off to sleep when they felt they had become too '*duro*' (drunk, lit. 'hard'), returning when they felt better, to continue. On the day of the *Diana*, we were

³ Not everyone agreed, and her sister told her off for saying this to me. I was told this too late to make a difference to my decision to dance.

⁴ This was my interpretation of his comment to me at the time. However, it is also the case that El Señor de Exaltación is a very powerful saint, and he could have been talking about devotion to the saint rather than to an abstracted notion of Jesus. Still, his point was that devotion to the Señor would outweigh any superstition about the dancing.

served fricasé (spicy lamb stew) for breakfast at 6am, and the beer started to flow not long after that. The Rosas Pampa fiesta was similar: a few people I knew were still staggering around drunk on the Monday morning.

Alcohol is the third point in a triangle which connects sociality with spirituality. Alcohol is clearly an important aspect of sociality, and various anthropologists have pointed out that the consumption of alcohol and the behaviour that results are culturally variable (see edited volumes by Douglas 1987; Gefou-Madianou 1992; McDonald 1994).

Anthropologists of Europe have highlighted the role of alcohol consumption in encouraging conviviality, particularly among men (Cowan 1990; Gefou-Madianou 1992); and Dwight Heath says that “on Latin America, virtually every ethnography has some allusion to drinking and drunkenness” (Heath 1987: 25). Penelope Harvey (1994) makes a similar point for the Andes, where ethnographers generally acknowledge alcohol to be of comparable cultural importance and religious significance to coca (Allen 1988; Carter and Mamani P 1989; Abercrombie 1998).

In *altiplano* Bolivia (excepting in very wealthy households) the connections between alcohol, sociality and spirituality are underlined by the conventions around drinking beer, which is the most common drink in the urban areas like Rosas Pampa. Generally speaking, whoever has bought the bottle, or had bottles given to them (for example when someone is nominated godparent) will pour out a small cup of beer for everyone. They then ask people to drink up, at which point everyone *ch'allas* Pachamama by dropping some beer on the ground, then either drains their beer or drinks around half the cup. As Carter and Mamani point out, alcohol consumption “almost always occurs in a social context” (Carter and Mamani P 1989: 320); and this can be quite literal – you don’t sip continually from your glass, but only drink up when others are drinking.

I often heard people saying “they made me drink”, which at first I thought was just an excuse. However, I soon realised that there was a strong element of empirical truth in this, since there is a lot of pressure around drinking. It is almost impossible to refuse a drink, because people just will not hear of it. If someone buys you a bottle of beer, you have to reciprocate, that is buy them one and drink it that evening with them. If poured a drink, you must drink along with everyone else. It is very hard to refuse an offer of any

⁵ In Southern Peru, people also drink to ‘liven up’ (Harvey 1994b).

drink, but one solution to the problem of getting overly inebriated is to *ch'alla* as much as possible to Pachamama before drinking. At the end, you can also tip out the remaining few drops of drink, which is another opportunity to regulate yourself. I was once told that Bolivians *ch'alla* to Pachamama so that they don't become drunk, but I was often caught out when I attempted these tricks, and people would refill my glass and ensure that I drank the whole amount.⁶ Of course, it is possible to get around these types of pressure, and those more discreet than myself do, and they also manipulate the conventions of alcohol drinking, as Catherine Allen's work on Andean Peru (1988) shows. But, just like the experience of community described in the previous chapter, the conviviality of alcohol consumption has a "compulsory quality", as Jane Cowan puts it for Northern Greece (1990). And this is not just for men. In Bolivia, drinking, and getting drunk, is the preserve of both men and women, although women are expected to be more self-controlled than men. Often it is women and children who suffer from the effects of excessive alcohol consumption by men, in terms of domestic violence and the loss of hard-earned cash (Harvey 1994, 1994b; Harris 2000 [1978]), but this certainly does not stop women from consuming impressive amounts themselves.

The centrality of alcohol to fiesta celebrations is symbolised by the fact that the *pasantes* dance at the front of a *comparsa* with their jugs of *trago* in hand, even if they have hired a waiter to do the actual serving for them [See Video Extract 4]. Provision of alcohol is one of the biggest expenditures a *pasante* has to cover, even though dancers will also buy one or two crates of beer, for themselves, for the *pasantes*, for the band, but during the rehearsals, *pasantes* need to circulate with *tragos* for the dancers. Alcohol is also linked with ritual obligations in rural areas (Buechler 1980; Carter and Mamani P 1989; Abercrombie 1998). When we danced in Quilloma, the village authorities made a point of circulating among the dancers to offer us *tragos*, notoriously stronger than *tragos* made in the city. During the fiesta, alcohol consumption helps create a sense of commonality of actions and experiences. The reciprocal arrangements around buying beer or liquor confirm friendships, and demonstrate generosity to fellow members of the community. Alcohol also notoriously leads to the expression of disputes, often fights between *vecinos* and

⁶ Dealing with my own alcohol consumption became something of a methodological consideration for me: it was extremely hard, and in fact rude, to refuse drinks; and people appreciated the fact that I was willing to drink with them. But I often came across the problem of alcohol and participant observation: the more you participate, the less you can observe (Thomas Abercrombie (1998) makes the same observation). My decision in the end was not to drink excessively, so that I didn't make myself sick, but to enjoy myself. It was, I think, easier for me as a foreign woman to moderate my drinking.

kinspeople. For all these reasons, alcohol is central to the fiesta: lubricated by alcohol, the collectivity of people dancing and watching becomes a community.

Alcohol and religiosity as a model of power relations: the Ch'alla and the misa/mesa.

Alcohol is not only central to the communality of the fiesta, but also forms relationships between kin and between humans and the supernatural. In this sub-section, I will argue that the provision and acceptance of alcohol makes people (and spirits) participants in very powerful gifting relationships based upon commensality. While alcohol has the power to provoke a sense of obligation in the receiving party, I hope to show that this is neither a straightforwardly reciprocal arrangement as envisaged in much Andean ethnography, nor is it based upon rights and responsibilities as in Liberal and Communitarian citizenship theory. In the Andes, alcohol consumption both oils conviviality and has a heightened significance because of spiritual/religious associations, which are examined in the following section. Carter and Mamani consider alcohol to be even more sacred than coca for the Aymara peasants of Irpa Chico, because, while coca can be consumed in individual and secular instances, alcohol “is reserved only for social occasions, and generally for occasions which have to do directly with the sacred” (Carter and Mamani P 1989: 320). This is not entirely the case in Rosas Pampa, unless watching the Saturday football matches can be considered a sacred experience. But alcohol consumption there is certainly a very social act, governed by formal conventions. Drink is not only shared with fellow *vecinos*, but also with Pachamama; emphasising and reinforcing the link between person and land (or zone, or *pueblo*) that I pointed to in the previous chapter.

Alcoholic drink is a sort of payment. This is not only the case for fiestas: when making a special request of someone, you nearly always have to take drink, usually beer.⁷ When my neighbours were asked to be *padrinos de matrimonio* (marriage godparents) for a relative, the mother and future godson came around with a basket of fruit and a couple of crates of beer. The evening turned into a long drinking session, the fruit remaining untouched until the following day. Doña Emiliana was not happy about the potential expenditure of being godmother, but had been put in a position where she could not refuse.⁸ In the

⁷ Although nowadays, it is often possible to substitute *refresco* for beer: it is cheaper, and the influence of the Evangelicals has made it more acceptable for others to ease off the alcohol.

⁸ The normal tactic for refusing/avoiding requests of this kind would be to not be in when the relatives came to call (Olivia Harris, personal communication).

Andes, alcohol is like coca in the power it has to mediate reciprocity in all kinds of relations, not only between kin, as above, but also between people and the spirits. So special ritual occasions, like the *Irpaqa*, *rutuchas*⁹ and offerings to Pachamama and the *achachilas* (spirits¹⁰) are always accompanied by drink, not just because they are special, but also because they have to do with expected reciprocity: you are making a request of the *achachilas*, Pachamama, the *padrinos*, the woman's family. The model is feeding, which is made evident in the way people talk about the *ch'alla*. Every time someone *ch'allas* by dropping alcohol onto the ground, they are feeding Pachamama as well as including her in the convivial circle. Sometimes this is done in order to request specific things from her. For example, my family's clay oven had been taking a very long time to cook things, so they *ch'alla'd* to Pachamama (as manifested in their courtyard, and the oven, made of the same substance), with alcohol, asking that it work better. Their request was answered, although this might also have been to do with the fact that they prevented the children from peeing on the ground near the oven while it was cooking. Allen argues that *ch'allas* are about the ways in which objects are imbued with life force, and food and drink need to be shared with them (Allen 1988). There are also more ceremonial ways of *ch'alla*-ing. Each year at Carnival time, people put up streamers, balloons, and flags to decorate, and spray their houses, cars and offices with beer in order to *ch'alla* them, for luck and success over the next year (see Plate 10).¹¹ At the festival of Alasitas in January, when people buy miniature versions of things they want for the next year, the *yatiri* (ritual specialist¹²) conducts a ceremony which involves burning incense, incantations, and, finally, the dropping of alcohol over the object.

⁹ The *Irpaqa* is a ceremony where the groom's family 'buy' the bride from her family. I discuss it in detail in the following chapter. The *rutucha* is the ceremony that accompanies a baby's first haircut.

¹⁰ *Achachila* is the Aymara word for grandparent. They are located in particular features of the local landscape, especially mountains, and the usual anthropological translation for these kinds of spirits is ancestors: for a discussion of the various types of deities in rural Bolivia, see Bouysse-Cassagne and Harris (1987) and Abercrombie (1998). People I spoke to did not make the distinction between ancestors and devils that is common in the anthropological literature about rural Bolivia (Bouysse-Cassagne and Harris 1987; Harris 2000b). They explained the *achachilas* as the mountain peaks themselves.

¹¹ I was told that Carnival time is also the time to *ch'alla* your animals and fields in the countryside; although llamas have their own special festival.

¹² An Aymara word meaning 'one who knows'.



Plate 10. *Ch'alla* of my room during Carnival

In August, specific offerings to Pachamama, for luck and well-being over the next year, involve spraying neat alcohol on fires, and at different parts of the house and yard, especially at the entrance and exit points, as a *ch'alla*. When I asked about what was going on, the *yatiri* in charge explained to me: “It’s so that she [i.e. Pachamama] can eat too. We don’t sleep in the street do we? We sleep in a house”. Another participant elaborated later, telling me that it was the same as if she did not give me food one time, I might complain, and not give anything back to her. The house is the same: “with trust I give to the house. I have to attend to her well, and if I do, she might collaborate with me” (“con confianza le doy a la casa. Tengo que atenderla bien, y me puede colaborar”). If she forgets to “attend to her”, then she falls when she enters the compound, and her desires will not come true. However, because she pays with “trust, warmth and emotion” (“confianza, cariño y emoción), so far, in her current house, almost everything she has wished for has happened, and there is still time for the rest to come true. If we feed Pachamama well, she will give luck. The August ritual is an offering to the house, and to Pachamama within it. Pachamama can be at the same time ‘Mother Earth’ and the earth within the household – a “Virgen” and a “Virgencita” (Virgin and Little Virgin).¹³ In

¹³ See Harris (2000) for a discussion of Pachamama as earth mother.

August, the harvest is over, and the earth is still open, and particularly hungry (Carter and Mamani P 1989; Fernandez Juarez 1995; Abercrombie 1998).



Plate 11. August *Misa/Mesa* to Pachamama

The specific Spanish word for such rituals is either *mesa* (table) or *misa* (Mass). They get mixed up in part because Aymara does not distinguish between the e and i sound, vocalising 'i's usually as the i in 'fist' unless they come after the consonants q and x, at which point they sound more like the Spanish 'e' (as the e in 'end'). But of course there is more going on, as the *misa/mesa* is an offering to the deities, in much the same way as the Catholic Mass is. The 'table' translation also underlines the fact that what is being offered to the deities is food (Fernandez Juarez 1995). *Misas/mesas* are not only conducted in August, but on any number of occasions, to ask for luck, a safe journey, a job, or to protect oneself against sorcery, for example. Tuesdays and Fridays are reserved for black

masses, which aim to hurt someone.¹⁴ When *ch'allaing* and placing sugar objects, wool, incense, etc., onto the paper 'altar', *yatiris* and ordinary people appeal for health, luck, wealth etc., to *achachilas*, Saints, Jesus and God. Abercrombie argues that the *ch'alla* is a poetic form that is a pathway which names the social universe of the K'ulta people, who live near Oruro. Through the *ch'alla*, K'ultas organise space concentrically, libating intimate spirits first, and progressing outwards to more distant deities. The ancestors/deities form part of the social universe, and sharing alcohol with them through the *ch'alla* is "a significant medium of organised social interaction". Moreover, it is an extension to supernatural beings of the obligations of reciprocity that mediate human relationships. The ancestors, deities and human beings are all "co-participants in a gifting relationship" (Abercrombie 1998: 346, 349).

That gifting relationship is not necessarily one of reliable, direct and commensurate return that is implied by the notion of reciprocity as it is often understood in Andean anthropology (Mayer 2002)¹⁵. An obligation to return the gift (Mauss 1999 [1950]) is not automatically a feature of the gift of food during the *misa/ mesa* and the *ch'alla*. I was often told that *ch'allas* are asking Pachamama (or the *achachilas*) for luck, *suerte*. The libation sequences documented by Abercrombie (1998) always end with an appeal to 'luck', which was also absolutely central to my experiences of *ch'allas* and Aymara rituals. Luck is important because the spirits may not respond as they should; they can be capricious, and they might not reciprocate. Gerardo Fernandez (1995) argues that luck is a particularly important aspect of household ritual activities in the city, maintaining that whereas in the countryside, *ch'allas* and other rituals are aimed at seeking to control the generative processes of the surrounding environment¹⁶, the city requires more of an orientation towards luck, in order to accumulate money and success. The contrast between country and city may not in fact be quite so stark, as the generative processes in the rural environment are also highly capricious, and the spirits need frequent feeding in order to persuade them to reciprocate too.

¹⁴ See Fernandez (1995) for a very detailed description of the different kinds of masses. I have never experienced a black mass, only the mass to Pachamama and a few white masses.

¹⁵ Although Mayer talks about 'asymmetric reciprocity' for situations where the return is less than the original gift, arguing that this is usually the result of inequalities in status between the participants in the relationship.

¹⁶ See also (Sallnow 1987; Harvey 1996; Abercrombie 1998)

Feeding involves something more than an expectation of direct return. Olivia Harris (1982) has argued that there are kinds of exchange relationships in the rural Andes that are based more on commensality than reciprocity. While some forms of labour exchange such as *ayni* are directly reciprocal, other forms rely upon the power that eating together has to underline and institute mutual obligation, between both kin and non-kin. Force-feeding is a particularly important aspect of Andean ritual, and ‘opens up’ the participants in the commensal relationship to each other: Penelope Harvey argues that in the Cusco region of Southern Peru, feeding relationships can be both one-way (between kin) and two-way (between non-kin). The latter require some sort of return, but in both, “feeding was generally understood to open up the possibility of co-substantiality and was thus a way of making powerful connections with others” (Harvey 1996: 92). Feeding relationships involve power and obligation in combinations rather more complex than a limited notion of reciprocity enables us to explain. Importantly, the participants are defined through those relationships, a point to which I shall return later.

Another important element is faith. Whether Pachamama, God or the Saints would respond, and whether if good or bad things happened it was directly their fault, is uncertain. However, it is important to believe, and I was told by a *yatiri* that if you believe, they will always give what they can. She told me that you always have to do the masses “in God’s name” (“con su nombre del Señor”) and ask the *achachilas* and *pachamamas*¹⁷ for luck. When I was part of a *misa/mesa* to ask for a safe return to England, I knelt by the fire where the offering was being burnt, to pray and watch the request going up to God. The interplay between God, Jesus, the Saints, Pachamama and the *achachilas* was confusing to me at the time, particularly when I was told that Pachamama was another Virgin¹⁸. However, I think this can be explained in two ways. First, the *yatiris* were engaging in cultural translation for me, that is explaining things in what they considered to be my terms. Second, although the deities are located in different places – the sky, or mountains – and some are more effective than others, they are in essence similar beings.

Different people have different *achachilas* that they appeal to in *misas/mesas*, with some, like the mountain peaks Mururata, Illimani and Wayna Potosi, being commonly

¹⁷ Particular instances of the Pachamama, such as courtyards or fields

¹⁸ For clarification of the various deities in rural *altiplano* Bolivia, see Bouysse-Cassagne and Harris (1987) and Abercrombie (1998).

worshipped. But people also appeal to *achachilas* near to their *pueblos*, and to Saints, such as Tata Santiago¹⁹, and Virgins, such as Mama Copacabana (the Virgin of Copacabana) and Mama Remedios. In explanations to me, the distinctions between Saints and *achachilas* were rather blurred, but they were all subsumed under the heading of Catholicism: one time, my family was discussing the August offering, and the very Catholic daughter said that she didn't believe in such things. Her mother turned to her and said "Well, why do you go to Church then, if you don't believe?". For her, they were all one, and God is simply "bigger than the *achachilas*" ("más grande que los achachilas").

A final element in the relationship between spirits and humans is sacrifice. Thomas Abercrombie (1998) has pointed out the centrality of the llama sacrifice to the *ch'alla* sequence, and to rural fiestas, where llamas and human beings become equivalent, and the sacrifice of the llama substitutes for a sacrifice of humans.²⁰ Furthermore, he considers the extreme level of intoxication during fiestas to be an offering of the body too. Llama fat is a central part of Aymara masses, and a llama foetus integral to the August feeding of Pachamama; so in some senses they are also human sacrifices. Fears about spirits eating people, for example the infamous Kharisiri who sucks blood or fat from humans²¹, or Pachamama eating people who have accidents, combine with this logic of sacrifice to create an understanding of deities that are, or can be, "cannibalistic" (Fernandez Juarez 1995).

Fernandez' use of this term is particularly instructive, because it brings into the open the nature of people's relationships with the spirits and thereby their locality. The spirits are inherent to physical aspects of the locality. The important point is that they are not distant, or removed, nor are they inanimate; they are immanent, in the sense of "indwelling, or inherent" in specific physical incarnations²² (OED). The relationships between *yatiris* and *achachilas* are personal, but also professional. We were discussing the need for *yatiris* to 'marry' an *achachila*, so that they can practice their profession, and I

¹⁹ Santiago is a manifestation of God, and is closely identified with *rayo*, or lightning, a very powerful deity in Andean religiosity (Bouysson-Bassade and Harris 1987; Platt 1997). One way of being marked out as a potential *yatiri* is to be struck by lightning (Fernandez Juarez 1995; Platt 1997). I did not come across any discussion of lightning during my fieldwork.

²⁰ See also Fernandez (1995) for discussion of the llama-human equivalence

²¹ Often, white anthropologists (and local non-Indians) in the Andes are accused of being *kharisiris* (Abercrombie 1998; Harris 2000), but I fortunately missed this particular rite of passage. However, I was warned not to get too drunk when I went to Quilloma to dance, because the *kharisiris* might suck my fat while I was unconscious.

asked whether male *yatiris* could marry male *achachilas*. I was told that they could, because the important thing with *achachilas* is that they are like lawyers, who will take on a case from a man or woman.²³ However, although most *yatiris* are male, some people I know felt that since Pachamama is female, she would receive female *yatiris* better, and they were more likely to be successful. Returning to Abercrombie's point, the spirits are social beings, with social characteristics such as capriciousness and favouritism, organised in a web of relationships with humans. As the first half of this chapter has shown, that web of relationships is mediated by alcohol consumption, which connects conviviality with the sacred in a form of sociality much influenced by that of the *campo*. I started my discussion of this with the fiesta, because it is the most intense experience of this model of sociality, but my further discussion has aimed to show that it is only one example among many.

The Evangelicals

The following section examines a contrasting model of the relationship between humans and the supernatural which is promoted, with considerable effort, in another, almost directly oppositional, religious sphere – that of the growing Protestant churches. I explore it in order to demonstrate the competing models of personhood which the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa reconcile in their everyday lives, and to demonstrate that the sense of community fostered by them differs profoundly from that expressed in the ritual practices of colonial Catholicism. Numerous scholars have noted the rapid growth of Protestant churches (usually Pentecostal) in Latin America since the 1960s²⁴. The more general surveys focus on Chile, Brazil and Central America as the centres of this development, and Bolivia has usually been seen as something of a latecomer to the new religions (Martin 1990). However, the Evangelical movement in Bolivia has also grown considerably in recent years.²⁵ In 1960, about 1% of the Bolivian population was

²² Rather than in the sense of 'permanently pervading the universe', or being everywhere.

²³ Tristan Platt has also noted the importance of legal language and ideas for providing a "literate framework within which the oral procedures of the [ritual] are inscribed" (Platt 1997: 223).

²⁴ See Stoll (1990), Martin (1990), Bastian (1992), Garrard-Burnett and Stoll (1993), and Lehmann (1999).

²⁵ Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism are taken here to mean more or less the same thing. The elements of Pentecostalism that distinguish it from earlier forms of Protestantism, such as the Methodists or Baptists, are a focus on the Holy Spirit, and spirit possession (often accompanied by speaking in tongues and/or faith healing) by the Holy Spirit, as well as a generally effervescent form of religiosity. See David Martin (1990) for a good delineation of the 'waves of Protestantism' in Latin America. Evangelical is term most often used, or *hermano/a*, by Bolivians themselves, so I use this terminology. Sometimes the Evangelicals

Evangelical (Bastian 1992). By the time of the 1992 census, this figure had grown to approximately 10% (Canessa 2000), and by 2001, newspapers were reporting a figure of about 25%.²⁶

My survey of Rosas Pampa showed that about 23% of the *vecinos* were *hermanos*. Given that Evangelicals attend church more conscientiously than Catholics, a significant proportion of religiously active people in Bolivia are Evangelical. My census showed that 28% of Catholic households went to the local church, which would make church-going Catholics about 21% of the total population²⁷, and the proportions of Catholics to Evangelicals roughly equal among those people who attend church. Some Catholics said that they went to churches in other zones. Given that this survey was conducted by members of the local Catholic youth group, the figures for Catholic attendance at church were almost certainly inflated, and this would accord with my personal observations of church congregations, the majority of which were children and one or two elderly people, except for the Masses celebrated in honour of the Fiesta. Furthermore, Evangelicals attend *cultos*, or services, once or twice a week, whereas Catholics will generally attend for more infrequent occasions, such as the Fiesta, a baptism or a marriage.

Evangelism and community: relating to other people

Community maintenance is an explicit theme of Evangelical *cultos*, and of the scholarly literature on Evangelicalism. Certainly, community maintenance was a central part of most of the *cultos* I attended in Rosas Pampa, run by the 'Misión Evangelica de Bolivia'.²⁸ The group would welcome new people, discuss upcoming events, celebrate birthdays, and organise visits to sick *hermanos*. I was welcomed effusively, and on two occasions went up to the microphone at the front to explain why I was there. People came up to me one by one and welcomed me in, calling me *hermana*, despite the fact that I made it clear that I did not intend to be converted. They never entirely gave up hope, wanting me to "take the *Evangelio* to England", but they were happy to include me, and ask me questions about England, and about religion in England. The practice of calling members

call themselves 'Christian'. For case studies of Evangelical Protestantism in Bolivia, see (Gill 1990; Ströbele-Gregor 1992; Gill 1993; Canessa 2000)

²⁶ Exact census figures have not yet been published.

²⁷ This is a slightly difficult statistic because it hasn't included households where there is a mix of evangelicals and Catholics (13% of total). It is only calculated on the basis of pure catholic households.

²⁸ This is a branch of the 'Evangelical Methodists' of Indianapolis, Indiana, US. In the US, they have 130 churches, and about 10 000 members. In Bolivia, they have about 1500 members. The Evangelical

'*hermano/a*' makes for a strong sense of togetherness, cementing membership right from the first meeting. In Rosas Pampa, the way you *saludar*, or greet, people is extremely important: many a dispute between neighbours comes out in the open when people do not greet each other on the street, and it is considered very important that children learn to greet adults that they know politely; it is a sign of good manners. *Altiplano* Bolivians are in general initially reserved with strangers. People do not usually move into informal forms of address when they first meet. So the familiarity of *hermana* as a greeting is immediately noticeable, and the warmth somehow quite unusual. Calling fellow evangelicals 'brother/sister' is by no means peculiar to Bolivia, but in the context of Bolivia it has a particular resonance.

Scholars of Latin American Evangelicalism tend to agree on the strength of community developed by Evangelicals, arguing that people in a state of insecurity, lacking family connections in the city, seek to replace their rural ties of community and family with another kind of belonging (e.g. Goodman 1988; Martin 1990; Ströbele-Gregor 1992). The rural category of *compadrazgo* is replaced with *hermano/a*, and a supportive, tight-knit community ensues. Migrants can draw on networks of *hermanos* in the city for economic support, just as they draw on solidarity networks based upon kinship or provenance from a particular *pueblo* (Long 1984). Women, and in particular single women (Gill 1990) alone in the city, look to the community of *hermanos* for emotional support and friendship. However, the *hermanos* that I knew did not conform to the rather needy image painted in much of the literature, of poor migrants at sea in the currents of uncontrollable social change, and cut loose from personal ties as a result of the move to the city²⁹. They were adults who had made decisions that they found fulfilling, and were very proud of the fact that they had developed a strong sense of community within the church.

Their sense of community was localized to the members of the church, but also *hermanos* felt a sense of belonging to a wider Evangelical community: the celebration of the first anniversary of the founding of the Rosas Pampa group included members of the same sect from different zones in El Alto; and the services in the 'Tent of the Holy Spirit'

Protestants are split into a rather bewildering number of groups, ('sectas' in Spanish) in Bolivia. This is one of the smaller ones. The Assemblies of God and the Seventh Day Adventists are perhaps the largest.
²⁹ Which may be reasonably accurate for women who come to La Paz as domestic servants (Gill 1990), but is not representative of the Evangelicals I knew. Although in a more 'macro' sense they might be seen as psychically vulnerable as a result of their poverty. See below for discussion.

(discussed in detail later) attracted *hermanos* from all over El Alto. Conscious work to develop identification at a level beyond peoples' immediate place of residence, the zone, has been a recognised part of missionary strategy in Latin America for some time now, as shown by the following extract from a book offering strategic advice to missionaries, which based its conclusions on the success of missions in Mexico City:

Periodic city-wide meetings serve a purpose: they create and maintain a sense of identity and oneness with the whole evangelical movement throughout the city. But the locus of weekly worship and fellowship must be the immediate neighbourhood. (Greenway 1973)

In some ways, consciousness of being *Alteño* is more marked in Evangelicals than others, who more often see themselves as either Bolivians or *Paceños* from the Department of La Paz, or *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa. Although the Evangelicals are promoting a mediated form of citizenship, they are creating a different set of mediations to the nested affiliations described in the previous chapter. These mediations map differently onto the same geographical space. They consist of, broadly, membership of a church, then membership of that church in El Alto, then Bolivia, then the relationship between that church and its 'father', usually in the US. At all levels, a contrast is drawn between those who are Evangelical, regardless of specific church affiliation, and those who are not.

However, the Evangelical community in Rosas Pampa is not simply an alternative community, it is an antagonistic version that runs on its own rules and attempts to grow at the expense of the Catholic/syncretic community described in the first section of this chapter, and in the previous chapter. Although the experience is a very positive one for individual *hermanos*, the Evangelical community constructs itself and is constructed by others in negative, through concentrating on what it doesn't do. Even for many members, one of the principle benefits of being an Evangelical is that they (or their husbands) no longer drink alcohol. Given the role of the fiesta in asserting community togetherness and the importance of alcohol in mediating sociality, Evangelical prohibitions on drinking alcohol, dancing during fiestas, watching the dancing and conducting *misas/mesas* show the extent to which the Evangelical churches are attempting to induce profound cultural change. In Rosas Pampa, friends who came up from La Paz to watch us dance in the *Entrada* told us later that when the dancers had gone for the social gathering in the Catholic church, an Evangelical group began telling people through loudspeakers that they should go to their houses, and not stay out on the streets drinking. The growth of Evangelicalism has provoked some tensions and unease in

Rosas Pampa. Many Catholics thought that Evangelicals considered themselves to be superior, not least because they repeatedly and publicly proclaim their belief that they have a superior (or the only) route to salvation. One friend asked me whether I thought the Evangelicals had it right about the Second Coming, and the need to be an Evangelical to be saved. Other people feel disapproved-of in the presence of evangelical discipline and sobriety, and they are not being paranoid in this. However, people roundly disputed the superiority of Evangelicals, through comments, for example, about how the *hermanas* are especially haughty, gossipy and malicious.

The Evangelical 'projects of community' are not entirely successful. Perhaps fortunately, people's membership of any evangelical community is neither absolute nor consistent. Nor do Evangelicals necessarily withdraw from other aspects of the collective life of their zone or families. 13% of Rosas Pampa households consisted of both Evangelicals and Catholics, and extended families often split between the two religions. Doña Emiliana's family is a case in point. One sister and brother-in-law were Evangelical, along with their daughter, but their two sons had remained Catholic. Another sister and her daughter (Doña Josefa and Victoria), had been *hermanas* for a while, but had left a couple of years previously. Another sister and brother-in-law remained Catholic. The Evangelical brother-in-law was still *padrino* to Victoria, and therefore *compadre* to Doña Josefa. When his son, Rubén, acted as *pasante* for the Quilloma fiesta, there was some concern within the family that he would disapprove. In the end, though, he was highly supportive, and proud, of Rubén, coming along to rehearsals, and helping with the organization. He was particularly keen to set up a group of migrants from Quilloma in La Paz and El Alto. He didn't drink alcohol during the whole process until the last day of the fiesta, when he could presumably resist no longer, and succumbed tearfully to inebriation. He continued to be an Evangelical, though.

People slip in and out of Evangelicalism, thus undermining its project of community-building. The Catholic catechist, Don Roberto, told me that Evangelicals will get their children baptised in their churches, but go to another zone to get a Catholic baptism "because they still want a party" ("porque quieren siempre fiesta"), then they return to their *culto* to weep and beg forgiveness for sinning. Although the fluid nature of Evangelical groupings are recognized in the literature (Martin 1990; Stoll 1990; Green 1993), I would argue that it is one of the more important characteristics of the move to

Evangelicalism, in Bolivia at least, and under-researched. Lesley Gill (1993) describes people trying out different evangelical sects before settling on the one they enjoy; but in general, mention of lapsing is remarkably thin on the ground. The churches themselves have very effective ways of dealing with lapses. At one of the last *cultos* I attended, a *hermano* got up to beg forgiveness from God and the congregation for sinning and for not attending the church for a while. He had been visited by some *hermanos* previously, and they had persuaded him to return, following the pastors' exhortations that if a *hermano* falls, the others should visit his house and bring him back. His long tearful speech told of how God had appeared to him to make him come back, and his participation during the service was fervent. He had been brought back into the community, at least temporarily.

Evangelism and Individuals: working on the embodied self

A discussion of lapsing moves us from Evangelism as project of community to Evangelism as project of the self, highlighting the hard work involved in such projects. This prefigures my discussion of projects of the self that are connected to citizenship in the following three chapters. Lapsing is particularly important, because it shows the side of evangelism that is characterised by discipline and regulation, contrasting with that side of the congregation which welcomes new people in warmly, greets members effusively and celebrates each *hermano's* birthday. Various prohibitions are part of this authoritarian character. Being a *hermano* involves following a very strict set of instructions. As one Catholic schoolgirl said to me, "if you're an Evangelical, whatever you do is a sin" ("si eres *hermana*, todo es pecado"), and her comments were echoed by a number of people who felt that it was simply too difficult to be a proper evangelical. It is impossible to live up to the behaviour expected of you, which I suspect is part of the point: there is always a deficit for which to beg forgiveness.³⁰ This appeals to two sides that people have: a side that likes the drama, even the melodrama of begging forgiveness, and a side that wants to be told clearly what to do. The Catholic Church, at least in Rosas Pampa, does not satisfy these aspects of people's characters to the same extent. The Father's sermons at the

³⁰ This operates on a widerscale too. As Olivia Harris points out:

One of the recurring leitmotifs in accounts of popular Christianity in the Andean region is whether the indigenous peasants can be called Christians at all. ... Surely the very exalted conditions laid down for what constitutes a good Christian or even a good enough Christian mean that this state is almost unattainable. This may well be part of the reason for the schismatic and competitive tendencies within Christianity In a situation of constitutive ambiguity, how better to confirm your own faith than by contrasting it with the lesser or misguided faith of others? (Harris n.d.: 3)

Masses I attended told people how they ought to behave, but presented these instructions almost as options, as though people needed to be persuaded through rational argument to adhere to them. And ultimately, the responsibility for compliance rests with each individual: I never heard of Catholics going to a fellow congregation member's house to persuade them to come back to Mass. Although being an Evangelical requires a great deal of willpower, membership of an Evangelical community is strangely passive, in that it requires little independent judgement.

The paradox is that this is contradicted by a philosophy of a more active relationship with God/the Holy Spirit and involvement in religious worship, unmediated by a priest³¹. However, I would say that this is deceptive. Another characteristic of the Evangelical services I attended was a strong educational element, where the American missionary conducted a course, entitled "the Basics of Christian Life" ("Bases de la Vida Cristiana"). He attempted to ask open questions, where the correct answer was not immediately obvious, and even to lead them to the wrong answer, so he could tell the congregation that they were wrong. The responses he got left me feeling that people wanted to be told what to do and what to think; and their study of the Bible was for them like studying an instruction book for life. They appeared to feel that those with more education than them needed to tell them how to interpret this instruction book.³² This accords with the structure of evangelical churches noted in 1969 by Christian Lalive d'Épinay (1969), who found that the Chilean churches reproduced the authoritarian patron-serf structure of the *hacienda*.

What is important about the form that Evangelicalism takes in El Alto is that the authoritarianism is focussed upon individual bodies. *Hermanos* are not supposed to drink alcohol or to smoke, nor should they dance in fiestas, or take part in *misas/mesas* to Pachamama or the *achachilas*, or have pictures of saints or virgins in their houses. The characteristic that defines *hermanos* for the vast majority of people is not drinking alcohol. For many, this is a major reason for joining. One friend of mine was thinking of going back to an evangelical church, since she had been an *hermana* when single. She told me

³¹ One of the key factors in the growth of Pentecostalism in the Latin American countryside is often the small number of Catholic priests, who take a long time to train and are usually foreigners. In contrast, the evangelical movement has relied much more upon indigenous lay preachers (Martin 1990; Stoll 1990; Bastian 1992; Green 1993).

³² Cf. Carlos Ivan Degregori (1991) on Marxism among Sendero Luminoso militants in Peru. This is, of course, not the stated intention of Protestant theology.

that she'd stopped because her husband drank, but she didn't want her children to grow up wanting to drink like their father. She thought that once they had fulfilled the *ayni* of beer bought for their wedding she would try to persuade him to join, "because sometimes life goes badly, doesn't it?" ("porque a veces mal va la vida, ¿no?").³³ Some men are unwilling to join precisely because it means they won't be able to drink alcohol, according to their wives. However, the content of the services that I attended did not include express prohibitions on drinking alcohol or dancing by the preachers, which I found quite surprising.

The 'techniques of the self/body' (Foucault 1990 [1984]) promoted by the churches do not function in an explicit way. It is more likely that *hermanos* tell stories to each other about, for example, their heroic struggle with smoking, and how God helped them to give up, as I experienced from one preacher. Perhaps the prohibitions are so well known, and the desire for help with self-regulation so often the reason for joining a sect, that it is not necessary to prohibit alcohol consumption explicitly during *cultos*. The argument that alcohol consumption is bad has usually been won before people choose to become *hermanos*. The *cultos* themselves focussed much more on preparing the self/body for Jesus to come, 'like a thief in the night'. The emphasis was on creating a personal relationship with Jesus, opening your heart to Him, and cleansing your body of sin in preparation for His coming, largely through begging Him for forgiveness. That personal relationship is hierarchical, framed in a rhetoric of love and also punishment, a fatherhood that is quite different from the relationships that people develop with *achachilas* or Catholic Saints. Worship of Jesus through praying and singing *with conviction*, along with study of the Bible, were the main religious activities, according to the rhetoric of the services. The Devil is sin, and the Holy Spirit the guide, but the appropriate way of behaving was not explicitly elaborated during these particular services.

However, the American missionary did stress the importance of characteristics such as not arguing, not gossiping, not being selfish, or envious. And at the climax of the services, the group exhort the Devil to "leave now" ("*sal ahora*"), along with various undesirable qualities such as laziness and failure. So people know the kinds of selves they need to construct, and they attempt to do this through their prayers to Jesus. The church

³³ Showing also the way in which people use different cultural codes, and do not necessarily reject the indigenous when they become Evangelical.

responds to the desires of the congregation for instruction, but its form of enforcement is a mixture of group and individual self-regulation in a Foucauldian sense. The regulation functions through the impossibility of ever living up to the image of the good, proper, or pure person: the essential sinfulness of human beings, for which they repeatedly need to beg forgiveness. This is obviously a central part of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, but its repetition within Evangelical churches is just astounding, as is the force with which people are repeatedly told that they do not match up.

Yet it seems to work for many people. One area in which the discipline is much appreciated is in gender roles and family life. All over Latin America, women have been the first to decide to join Protestant sects, bringing their husbands in later on (Martin 1990; Stoll 1990). This has been attributed by some to the kinds of gender roles encouraged by the Evangelicals (Gill 1990; Brusco 1993). Men are encouraged to take a more active role in family and household life. The prohibition on drinking means they have to behave themselves better than usual, and their wives can feel less vulnerable to domestic violence precipitated by alcohol. The people I spoke with backed this up: one woman delightedly said to me that “It’s a joy to go along this road, because before my husband drank a lot, and we fought. Now we’re fine, there’s no argument.” (“es gozo de ir en ese camino, porque antes mi esposo tomaba mucho, y peleábamos. Ahora estamos bien, no hay discusión”). A male congregation member said that he used to drink and fight with his wife, but now he thinks of his family, and is much happier; his children no longer suffer from his drinking either. His wife said that he had become more home-loving (“más hogareño”). In the words of those who had made the decision to become *hermanas* (*sic.*) there is a very clear ‘antes’ (‘before’) which has to do with drinking alcohol: “before, my husband drank really badly” (“antes, mi esposo grave tomaba”). Now, they feel much better. Whether this means that they have more money to spend on the household or not, the re-focussing of their husbands’ attention on the family was very important to them.³⁴

This hints at an important contrast with the more communal version of sociality expressed in the popular religiosity of the fiesta and the *ch’alla*. Evangelicals’ relationship with the spirits is dyadic – between the individual and Jesus. Although not a bounded view of the self, because, as I discuss below, the self is permeable to the Holy Spirit, the

³⁴ As Elizabeth Brusco (1993) found in Colombia.

emphasis upon the private, personal individual contrasts with the view of the self I described in the first section of this chapter: as an unequal participant in a web of social relationships that includes supernatural beings. This is evident in conversion stories. Most *hermanos* I spoke with initially stressed their individual revelation, how Jesus had come into their lives, and shown them the true path, despite the fact that it was often also the case that their insertion into social networks had an important role in bringing them to the church: with a little probing it was usually possible to identify a sister-in-law, cousin or parent who had been important in their conversion.³⁵

Effervescence/Worship

The focus on the personal as a source of religious experience is brought to the fore in an examination of forms of worship in Evangelical churches, which is often ignored in the literature in favour of sociological data. The intensely embodied nature of the evangelical experience is no better observed than during the services themselves. Evangelical services can be quite disturbing for observers; or at least they were for this one. One fortnight, just before I left Rosas Pampa, the 'Tent of the Holy Spirit' ('Carpa del Espiritu Santo') arrived in the zone. They held nightly services, attended by people from all over El Alto, so I went along one night. The Evangelical church that runs this tent is from Villa Dolores, and occasionally runs these kinds of campaigns, according to them in order to rescue people from alcoholism, drug addiction and gangs. Although the tent was only half full, I would estimate that there were more than 300 people present, packed in close to the stage. The preacher on the stage told stories in Spanish and Aymara, using Bolivian examples, and every so often, a group of singers would start to sing hymns of praise, and the audience would join in. When the preacher had given his main sermon, he began to pray, accompanied first by the singers, then keyboard music, then drums as well. The praying gradually built up in intensity and volume, to the point where the singers took turns to scream into their microphones, which were set at pop-concert decibel levels, exhorting the Devil to "**sal ahora, sal ahora**", in dramatic, emotive voices. The audience joined in, exhorting laziness, problems, hatred, addiction, prostitution,

³⁵ The missionaries are well aware of the importance of family networks in conversion: "urban populations are criss-crossed in every direction by natural human bridges over which the gospel can pass from person to person and from family to family" (Greenway 1973). This particular writer thinks that the connections that people have with the rural areas of their birth are a particular bonus in this sense for the evangelical mission. The role of wives in converting husbands went unsaid: most had either succeeded or were still trying. Conversely, I never met a married male *hermano* whose wife was still Catholic.

abortion, debt, failure, witchcraft, all to “*sal ahora*”. It was loud, fast and repetitive, the volume working on the physical body as well as the emotions.

Then they shifted, after a short pause, to exhorting the Holy Spirit to enter, calling on those present to receive the Holy Spirit, in order to be healed. Several women at this point shook all over as though possessed, and collapsed on the floor. Members of the church went through the audiences to pick out these women and accompany them to the front stage, where they met the preacher. They were lined up, on the stage, and the preacher got each individual to tell the audience what had happened to them: they felt the Holy Spirit, they had been cured of chronic stomach pain, etc. After they had given their testimony, he rubbed his hands together and placed one near to their foreheads, not touching. At which point each one stiffly keeled over backwards and fell with a thud to the floor. They then got up and walked off. It was astounding to watch.³⁶ The Tent of the Holy Spirit was clearly an intense bodily experience for all present, who were living devotion and faith through the body, in a manner comparable to the fiesta dancing described in the previous chapter. For me, both experiences were extreme, yet both are quite normal for many *Alteños*.³⁷

The effervescence I witnessed in the Tent of the Holy Spirit had an unpleasant and frightening overtone for me, and it is hard to avoid the feeling that many Evangelical churches are seeking to take advantage of people when they are vulnerable and suggestible.³⁸ Without seeking to provide a purely physiological rationale for conversion/religious experience, the role of illness and emotional crisis in a number of people’s conversion stories may indicate a certain amount of emotional vulnerability for some at the point of conversion, although it is also the case that conversion stories can only be narrated in terms of extreme crisis. One *hermano* told me how when his father died, he promised to go to the evangelical church, but hadn’t, until his mother became paralysed, and the power of prayer had healed her again. Another *hermana* had wanted to

³⁶ Dissociative states associated with trance or possession seem to be a universal human phenomenon (Goodman 1972). Erika Bourguignon (1994) notes that the experience of “sensory overload” from the drumming, dancing, hyperventilation and crowding in these kinds of rituals can often induce dissociation. Rouget (1980) stresses the importance of music and rhythm in what he calls “communal trances”, where repetition, *accelerando* and *crescendo* create a state of emotional excitement that leads to trance states. He notes the importance of theatricality to such effervescence.

³⁷ I felt much safer on the margins, particularly in the Carpa: I did not want to join the crowd during the service because I felt afraid of what might happen to me.

become evangelical, but could not persuade her husband until he became ill. William Sargant (1973) argues that in dissociative states, people are extremely suggestible. He considers that Evangelical pastors manipulate this state of suggestibility, which results from extreme emotional trauma provoked during the service, through frightening sermons, dance, music and repetitive rhythms. In his opinion, susceptibility to the emotional trauma of the service may be connected to illness or emotional crisis.³⁹ Of course, the Evangelicals' explanation is far more benign: they say that they are seeking to help people suffering trauma and bring them to the gospel.⁴⁰

The Evangelical mission on my street ran their twice-weekly services along similar lines to the Tent of the Holy Spirit, although on a much smaller scale. Worshippers would arrive, greet those already there, and sit down, ready to begin singing the hymns of praise, shouting, dancing and clapping where appropriate. Services were led by members of the family who own the building in which the mission is based, as well as ordinary members of the congregation. After singing a few hymns, we would sit down to hear the sermon. Both the sermons and hymns were accompanied by shouts by the leader or preacher, to which there are set replies from the congregation. There are many, such as when the leader/preacher says "to His name!" ("a Su nombre!") and the congregation replies "Glory!" ("Gloria!"); then the leader might say "to His glory!" ("a Su gloria!"), to which the response is "more glory!" ("más gloria!"). Sometimes the leader asks for "a war cry"

³⁸ Some of the literature on charismatic religion suggests this directly (Sargant 1973). Of course, such extreme loss of control is also threatening to the cultural expectations of someone like myself who is from a non-charismatic English Protestant background.

³⁹ Famous religious visionaries, such as John Wesley, Francis of Assisi and Ignatius Loyola, were, according to Sargant, obsessional characters who went through a period of illness or emotional crisis prior to their visions or conversion. Sargant's thesis is that it is possible to arouse the emotions to extreme states of excitement which then produce brain inhibition and temporary nervous collapse. He tells of an incident in Pavlov's laboratory where there was a flood, but the dogs were rescued by a lab assistant in time for them to survive. Some, however, had undergone emotional collapse of this kind, which seems to have 'wiped' their brains, and their conditioned behaviour and reflexes had been abolished. In what sound like distinctly dubious experiments on soldiers traumatized by events in World War II, he noticed that a similar process occurred when humans were brought to emotional collapse. After the breakdown, soldiers were apparently able to remember the event that had disturbed them in a calm way, and felt a sense of release similar to the feelings of redemption reported by converts who have received the Holy Spirit.

⁴⁰ On a more general level, it is possible to argue that there are groups of people in Latin America who may be vulnerable because of the structurally violent effects of poverty, and Evangelical missionaries certainly target them: "certain sectors of the city population can be disciplined [*etc.*] and churches planted in greater number during the present period of rapid urbanisation" (Greenway 1973: 12). It is in this sense that the sociological explanations for the growth of Evangelicalism, which highlight the ways the religion helps its adherents, particularly migrants from the countryside, to cope with rapid social change and economic hardship, can work. For examples of this kind of explanation, see Martin (1990), Ströbele-Gregor (1992) and Annis (1994). On the other hand, these explanations can only go so far: still the majority of people cope, and do well, without the aid of Evangelicalism, and there are Evangelicals at all strata of Bolivian society.

("un grito de guerra"), at which point the congregation will whoop. Once, the owner of the building gave a sermon, but it was more often an experienced preacher from another group of the same association in El Alto, or the American missionary who runs the Bolivian arm of this mission. The sermons usually led into a collective prayer, during which women would approach the front stage and the preacher, kneel down and beg Jesus for forgiveness for their sins, crying and wailing. It is at this point that the Holy Spirit comes to visit/possess the devotees. The prayers also included exhortations to the Devil, laziness, failure, etc., to "sal ahora", along the same lines as in the Tent of the Holy Spirit, only with less people, and therefore less sound.

Instead of the intense experience of crying because of drunkenness during the Fiesta, the tears, indeed wails, of a truly good Evangelical come twice a week from devotion, the power of prayer, the emotion of begging Jesus to forgive her. Dancing, singing, rhythm, and emotion are not confined to social events or the annual fiesta, but are part and parcel of biweekly worship sessions. The millennial stress during the service on the imminent return of Christ heightens the experience. Whatever the reasons for their initial experiences of the Holy Spirit, the women in particular enjoy the catharsis of the tearful prayer each week, and *feel* the presence of the Holy Spirit while they pray. Felicitas Goodman argues that Pentecostalism results from a conflict inherent in Christianity from its very inception. The story of doubting Thomas (John 20:29) highlights the tension between the need to experience God, to see, versus the imperative for faith without seeing: Jesus says "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed". Pentecostalism responds to the very human need for ecstatic **experience** of God/religion (Goodman 1988: 63).

Discussions of Evangelical Protestantism in Latin America tend to focus more on its orality than this issue of experience. David Martin (1990), for example, argues that Latin American and North American Pentecostalism is a fusion of the pre-literate and the post-literate, with 'pre-literate' elements of oral culture fusing with 'post-literate' video and TV. His whole thesis is far too evolutionary, but he is not alone in noticing the dissonance between the first two waves of Protestantism's emphasis on literacy in terms of reading the Bible, and the third wave, or Pentecostal, emphasis on singing and preaching (see also Bastian 1992). The Evangelical *cultos* I attended were a fusion of the two, with the American missionary attempting to educate the congregation in Bible

studies. During one service, I noticed that one of my friends was following the readings very closely in her Bible; but I happened to know that she had lost her job a few months before, for being illiterate. Even the more literate members of the congregation had to mouth the words as they read their bibles; no wonder, because the versions they had were written in Peninsular Spanish. In several services, readers stumbled over the *vosotros* verb forms in the verses they were allocated.⁴¹

Speech and experience are intimately connected in Evangelical *cultos*. As the description of the Tent of the Holy Spirit shows, preachers generally affect their audience by *how* they communicate rather than *what* they communicate. They are performing their religion, and so too are the congregation:

Pentecostals experience the faith not principally as a set of objective doctrines or abstract theological tenets, but as the living, dynamic work of the Holy Spirit in their daily lives. . . . As transitional events in the life of the believer, both religious conversion and spirit baptism, manifested in speaking in tongues or simply 'ecstatic speech' are immediate experiences of the personal presence of God. (Schultze 1994: 75-6)

As with the fiesta, it is the immediate experience and emotion inherent to performing devotion that make it real. And that experience is felt **internally** to the individual body. *Hermanos*, their pastors and their God combine to work on the bodies of the worshippers. The body is the site for struggles within the self between sin and purity, sickness and health, salvation and condemnation. It is also where the Holy Spirit enters. Although Evangelical religion is a collective endeavour, the ecstatic experience is very individual, the Spirit infuses the body. The self is bounded, but permeable to the workings of the Holy Spirit. The individual, private, experience creates the individual as ontologically prior to the collectivity.

Hybridity and 'hypocrisy'

Andrew Canessa makes a similar point when he argues that the Evangelicals are especially enthusiastic in their embracing of "Western-oriented" modernity. He maintains that Evangelicals come out of groups of people "at the forefront of modernisation", who are rejecting identifications based upon "relative and shifting categories" (2000: 120), and

⁴¹ Most Latin American Spanish does not use the familiar second person plural verb form, *vosotros* of mainland Spanish, instead using *ustedes*, or the polite version which is the same as the third person plural.

opting for more essentialised forms, rejecting ‘paganism’.⁴² The Evangelical explosion has led to non-Evangelicals questioning their own religious beliefs. Some are concerned that the Evangelicals might have the right God – they might be right about Jesus coming again, and where would that leave those who are not Evangelical? Don Víctor once said that he was worried about what the Evangelicals told him, but that he’d been Catholic all his life, so it would not be right to change. Others have decided that Evangelicals and Catholics pray to the same God, and there’s only one for everyone; just different ways of being close to Him. The problem is that the traditional Andean response, which would be syncretism, or hedging one’s bets⁴³, is not easily assimilable with the rhetoric of the Evangelicals, precisely because of its absolutism.

Nevertheless, Evangelism would probably not work if people were not hypocritical in practice, since the deficit for which to beg forgiveness would not exist. Sinning and begging forgiveness from Jesus are absolutely central to Evangelical worship, as I have demonstrated earlier in this chapter. On the surface, Evangelical churches preach against ‘superstition’. Yet I was told by a friend that her *yatiri*’s biggest client was a large Evangelical church in El Alto that hires him to conduct *misas/mesas* so that it will gain more income and more converts. Hypocrisy is also one of the characteristics that Catholics ascribe to *hermanos*, for example when they make comments about the malicious nature of *hermanas*, their propensity to gossip and comment on others’ behaviour, or the impossibility of not sinning, since everything is a sin, and about how *hermanos* go to Catholic churches for weddings, baptisms and other ceremonies. Andrew Canessa argues that Evangelicals, like Aymara indigenous activists, choose essentialist categories of identity in order to confront or deal with modernity and their own liminal (and low-status) position as rural-urban migrants (2000). While this argument may work in rhetorical terms, in practice, being an Evangelical is perhaps simply a different form of hybrid, ‘hypocritical’ identity. The fluidity of people’s relationships with the Evangelical church and the issue of lapsing is the way in which that hybridity functions.

⁴² He compares them in this to *Kataristas*, who similarly “reject the possibility of a middle ground” of “cultural mestizaje”, opting to reject Western cultural models in favour of a revitalised and mythical indigenous past. As he points out, many more have chosen evangelism over *Katarismo*, because of the perception of the higher status of the West.

⁴³ Michael Sallnow quotes the Catholic Father Arriaga, an ‘extirpator of idolatry’ from the 17th Century, who said in 1621 that the “common error” of the natives “is their tendency to carry water on both shoulders, to have recourse to both religions at once.” (quoted in Sallnow 1987: 51)

At the heart of the contemporary religious picture in El Alto is a contest over how deities touch people, a concern which was central to the first wave of evangelising in the 16th and 17th centuries (MacCormack 1991). Different religious experiences meet and clash, creating multiple possibilities for people to experience God. This chapter has only examined two in detail, but Catholic revivalism would be equally worthy of attention. Out of the mix comes one of the most peculiarly *Alteño* struggles of today, which is fought on both geographical and bodily terrain. Colonial Catholicism relates directly to place, and the fiesta dancing moves through space to reinforce that, while Evangelical groups make incursions using rooms in people's houses, then sound and PA systems mark their territory as the singing and praying are audible all around the church, or posters go up, pamphlets are distributed, signs advertising video showings appear, and the orange and blue Tent of the Holy Spirit takes up residence for two weeks.

Evangelical identity is so closely associated with what people do with, and put into, their bodies, that it demands a quite profound change in its adherents. One might ask whether, if dancing and drinking are so central to communal life and Bolivian identity as I have argued in this and the previous chapter, the Evangelical movement is 'de-Bolivianising' cultural identity. Not even Muratorio's 'alienated folkloric consciousness' (1980) experienced during the fiesta appears to be available to Evangelicals, who are told that "the madman dances and the idiot watches" ("el loco baila y el sonso mira").⁴⁴ On the other hand, the use of Aymara in Evangelical sermons and hymns creates and underlines a different kind of ethnic identity, one which paradoxically bypasses the *mestizo*, Bolivian, nation-building project in favour of an orientation towards the North American 'father' church. There is debate about the role of Evangelicalism in encouraging some forms of indigenous ethnic consciousness. Some authors seem to feel that it is at least in part an example of North American cultural imperialism (Stoll 1990), a position with which I am sympathetic. Others have shown that some people use Evangelicalism to promote and assert their indigenous identity (Muratorio 1980; Rappaport 1984). This is clearly an issue that depends on the context. In the case of Rosas Pampa, any promotion of an Aymara consciousness by Evangelical groups seems to be largely on the US missionaries' terms,

⁴⁴ Although if they attend state schools they will have the opportunity to join in school folklore displays.

and focuses people's sense of belonging more on the city of El Alto than on the zone of Rosas Pampa.⁴⁵

However, the overall Evangelical cultural project is likely to be limited in its success precisely because of the 'hypocrisy', or frailty of the *hermanos*. As one *hermana* said when she heard that I was going to dance in the fiesta: "Of course we'll come out and watch you, we're going to sin on that day!" People often only partially adhere to Evangelism. This is somewhat peculiar, because it would seem to be logically inconsistent to have a very absolutist and essentialist approach to identity (such as a concern for what might be the true religion), but at the same time to hold two or more of those identities concurrently or sequentially. Hybridity would seem to be only possible if the identities that exist together are porous, undecided and shifting. But in El Alto, hybridity can somehow consist of different fundamentalisms or absolutisms, as this chapter has shown. People do not and usually cannot make the choice between the two religious domains in a once and for all way.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have discussed the forms of sociality and the self promoted by competing religions in Rosas Pampa in order to illustrate the importance of analysing local understandings of the self and the individual-community relationship for a discussion of citizenship, a theme which I explore in further depth in the second half of this thesis. The relationships that people have with supernatural beings both model and mediate other power relationships, and as such impact upon their citizenship. Colonial Catholicism presents a model of relating to those in power that incorporates their capriciousness, greed and particularism, and thus sits uneasily with a universal model of citizenship based upon an abstract set of rights. Furthermore, colonial Catholicism highlights a very real relationship between people and localised notions of places, physical entities in the natural environment, which are active beings. A vision of *unmediated* national citizenship depends upon a sense of "imagined community" with fellow Bolivians (humans) who are only located in a generalised place, that is Bolivia, as created in maps, censuses, newspapers and on TV (Anderson 1991), and this is undermined by the strong connection with place experienced in popular religiosity.

⁴⁵ The encouragement of lay preachers may lead to a future 'Bolivianisation' of Evangelicalism, as is happening elsewhere in Latin America (Martin 1990).

The model of sociality and the self that is revealed through an investigation of colonial Catholicism as it operates today does not therefore fit with Liberal notions of citizenship. Neither is it fully captured by Communitarianism, because both assume a model of the individual person as bounded and autonomous, something which is contradicted by the imbrication of humans and spirits implied in the kinds of gifting and feeding relationships described in the first part of this chapter. In contrast, contemporary Evangelicalism's project of the self focuses on the individual. This does not mean, as some have argued, that Evangelicalism promotes individualism, in fact it places much emphasis on the construction of community. However, the personal and private focus of Evangelical religious experience constitutes the individual worshipper as permeable only to Jesus or the Holy Spirit in a dyadic and unmediated way. Thus, individuals are ontologically prior to the collectivity, and bounded and autonomous in relation to other members of their community. This accords with the notions of the person characteristic of both Liberal and communitarian citizenship theory, for even though communitarian theorists stress the importance the community, their concept of the self is prior to the collectivity and shaped by it, rather than created in dialectical relation to it.

Evangelicalism is on the surface an aggressively modernising project which condemns colonial Catholicism as superstition and traditional and considers itself supremely true and rational. The Evangelical view of modernity consists of a form of community that is detached from localised place – the Tent of the Holy Spirit can set up anywhere. Its project of the self requires a great deal of work on the bodies of *hermanos*, as they are enjoined to stop drinking and dancing and learn to worship in a very physical way. However, the absolutist rhetoric is blurred in practice, as illustrated by the example of the Evangelical sect that asked a *yatiri* to conduct *misas/mesas* in order to increase their income. More mundanely, Evangelicalism uses existing networks embedded in place to draw in new recruits, and relies upon lapsing (the sin-forgiveness nexus) for its power. People make choices, for example using Evangelicalism to help their husbands stop drinking. They draw on the resources provided by apparently conflicting models of the self in variable ways and to different extents throughout their lives. Hybridity and hypocrisy soften the edges even of one of the most absolutist projects of the self operating today.

CHAPTER 6

'ESTAR GENTE': PROPER MEN, PROPER WOMEN

The first part of this thesis concentrated on the ways in which people construct communities and constitute themselves as collective political subjects in Rosas Pampa. The second part continues my investigation of citizenship by developing one of the themes introduced in the previous chapter, namely the notions of the person and self that underwrite the kinds of collectivities I have described above. By focussing on different notions of the self at work in Rosas Pampa I aim to flesh out the somewhat crude contrast between individual and community found in much general discussion of citizenship. In this chapter I use a case study of a young couple at the beginning of their life together to argue that in an important sense the self is created through relationality, and that relational senses of self underwrite the sense of collectivity that is so important for citizenship in Rosas Pampa. Furthermore, moral values associated with the heterosexual couple inform people's experience of politics and citizenship in a wider sense. As with the forms of sociality described in Chapter 5, people's understandings of appropriate behaviour within the heterosexual couple are a model for power relations in society. They demonstrate once again the inadequacies of how political theory of citizenship proposes the individual-collective binary.

The previous chapter argued that colonial Catholic religious experience constructs the self as relational¹, and I explore this theme further by examining one of the primary relations that constitute individual selves, that is marriage.. My discussion of the case study of Victoria and Carlos and the attempts of various family members to keep them together reveal the work that goes into the development of relational senses of self and the networks that are part of *vecindad*. Aymara notions of the person tend to construct the subject in process, so that one becomes a full person through what one does (Canessa 1998). Furthermore, one is not a full person in ideal terms unless part of a community, and, perhaps more importantly, part of a heterosexual couple (Harvey 1994). Examining the processes involved in creating these kinds of persons leaves open the possibility of

¹ By saying that the self is created through relationality, I do not want to imply that individual self-consciousness does not exist, a trap that many anthropologists working on the person as cultural category have fallen into, according to Anthony Cohen (1994). Cohen argues that Western anthropological work on the person can be demeaning because it sometimes assumes that individuals in other cultures are automatons, fulfilling the roles prescribed for them.

'failure', and therefore shows that individuals are embedded in their communities in a dynamic and not automatic way. It also demonstrates the importance of family regulation of intimate relationships, particularly at the early stages. This regulation operates somewhere between the civic, public realm of politics discussed in the first part of the thesis and the more personal realm of the household. It involves immediate and extended family as well as the occasional specialised outsider brought in to provide an independent opinion. For most of those involved, the state belongs to the latter category, and should only be brought in as a last resort.

I use a case study in this chapter principally because I was able to witness most of the ins and outs of the development of the relationship in the year that I lived in Rosas Pampa. All those party to the discussions I present below talked with me about their positions and opinions at various times. The three women at the heart of the conflicts, namely Victoria, her mother and her mother-in-law, were particular friends of mine. Yet their specific case, as told in the first section of this chapter illustrates general points about the interaction between kinship and the notions of self that underpin *cholo* citizenship², as I outline in the second section.

Carlos and Victoria

Victoria and Carlos' child, Orlando, was born in May 1999, a month before Victoria's 16th birthday, and Carlos' 20th. The couple knew each other because Victoria's mother, Doña Josefa, rented a room from Carlos' mother, Doña Gregoria. Doña Josefa is a single mother herself: her two children, Victoria and her three-year old brother Ángelo, are from different fathers, both of whom abandoned Josefa before she gave birth. They have all grown up as a very tight family unit. Victoria's relationship with her father is strained: when he found out that she had got together with Carlos, he disowned her.

Carlos' parents, Doña Gregoria and Don Lucio, are still together, and Carlos is the

² The personal nature of the story presented in this chapter meant that I have had to consider questions of research ethics carefully. Everybody was aware that I was in Rosas Pampa as a researcher, but at the time I did not expect to use this story in my thesis, so I did not request specific permission to publish the details, although there were times when I took notes in front of people during or after the events I describe here. As a compromise, I decided to use pseudonyms and leave out some of the most intimate details, and to try to be fair to everyone. I have also decided to consult directly with those involved before publishing any part of this chapter more widely or in Spanish.

eldest of three brothers and two sisters. His younger sister, Virginia, is about a year older than Victoria.

Doña Gregoria and Don Lucio's family occupies two houses, each of which consists of three separately-built rooms arranged around a courtyard. Most of the family lives in the house belonging to Don Víctor, Doña Gregoria's older brother. Doña Gregoria's sons sleep in one of the rooms of the second house, and they rent out one or both of the other two rooms. Before I arrived and rented a room there, Doña Josefa, Victoria and Ángelo rented another one, and Carlos used to sleep in the third, as his younger brothers do now. Carlos used to keep Victoria company while she waited for her mother to return from her job at the *Alcaldía*. When the two families discovered Victoria's pregnancy 6 months in, it precipitated something of a crisis. Carlos had neither graduated from high school nor completed his military service, so he was not in a strong position with regard to supporting a wife and child. The families decided that he should do his military service, on the grounds that it would make it easier for him to find work and support Victoria and his child. It appears that some of Victoria's relatives were concerned that Carlos was preparing to escape his responsibilities, and disappear after his military service.

Victoria's delivery was rather complicated. She gave birth at home, although her mother had wanted to take her to the hospital. However, Doña Gregoria had heard that it is cold in the hospital, and the day after delivery they wash the mother in cold water, and don't look after her³. When they read the coca leaves, they found out that Victoria would have the baby fine at home. Doña Gregoria brought the midwife, and Doña Josefa, her sister (Doña Emiliana), and her sister's tenant were also present. Carlos was afraid to enter the room, and Doña Emiliana and Doña Josefa were very scared that Victoria would not survive. So they made the room very hot, heating it with alcohol on a stove, and burning various herbs and incenses to protect her. Although it was a frightening experience for all concerned, both Victoria and the baby were healthy. When I arrived, Carlos was in the last few months of his military service, and Orlando was about 5 months old. Carlos was stationed in El Alto, so he was able to visit home on many weekends and some evenings,

³ A problem also mentioned by Alteñas in Terrazas and Dibbits (1994). Barbara Bradby has investigated rural-urban migrant women's attitudes towards giving birth in hospital in Sucre, Bolivia. Her informants appreciated some aspects of hospital care, particularly after actually giving birth, but fear others, such as

during which time he would go to stay with Victoria and her family, who had by this time moved out, and rented a different room just down the street.

Carlos flexes his muscles

During *Todos Santos* (All Saints), when Carlos' military service was coming to an end, both families went to the cemetery to accompany the recently dead, who are "hot souls" (in Aymara, "junt'u alma"). People take lots of bread, fruit, sweets, and decorations, and others go round praying for the souls, in return for gifts of bread, sweets, fruit, and such like. The most successful were men who went around singing prayers in Aymara.⁴ Some groups of people drink beer at *Todos Santos*, others drink soft drinks. Doña Josefa apparently got very drunk and hit Ángelo when she got home. Carlos objected angrily to this, and made Victoria and Orlando move in with his mother.

Victoria and her mother were both very upset by this, and little Ángelo stopped eating and made himself ill. Carlos did not approve of Doña Josefa's actions, and he felt that Victoria did not respect his own mother enough. Victoria felt that she had no allies in Doña Gregoria's house. Victoria and Doña Josefa felt that they had addressed the issue of Ángelo, curing both him and Orlando by recovering their '*ajayus*' which they had lost from the fright.⁵ Doña Josefa's own sister, Doña Emiliana, had scolded her for beating Ángelo, and Doña Josefa regretted her actions.⁶

Doña Josefa relied upon Victoria to look after Ángelo, and prepare the food while she was out at work. She was very upset at losing her child, and worried about Victoria's situation in her in-laws' house. She told me that she was concerned that Victoria would become Doña Gregoria's "slave", having to cook for everyone. Both sides seemed to rub each other up the wrong way, though: Doña Gregoria thought Victoria was lazy, Victoria didn't see why she should be responsible for Doña Gregoria's children.

Caesarian sections or episiotomies, both of which are considered to open up the body to air, and cause subsequent problems (1996; 1996).

⁴ In contrast, in the Norte de Potosí, the most successful prayers at *Todos Santos* are those in Latin and Spanish (Harris n.d.).

⁵ The *ajayu* is the soul. Children's *ajayus* are particularly vulnerable to frights, when they can be lost, and the child can become sick as a result. Calling back the *ajayu* prevents or heals this sickness.

⁶ In her defence, I would point out that she was at this time facing the loss of her job at the *Alcaldía*, because of the likely defeat of Condepa in the local elections of December. I suspect that she was particularly stressed about how she was going to support her family.

There was a peculiar hierarchy problem between Victoria and Virginia: Virginia, who is about a year older, was remarkably disapproving of Victoria. However, Victoria has more mature status because of being a mother. For example, she was able to get a loan from BancoMujer because, as she put it, “my son gives me adulthood” (“mi hijo me da mayoría de edad”). Furthermore, Virginia had to cope with someone encroaching on her territory, since she was usually in sole charge of the house, at least in the afternoons when she was home from school, as her mother tended to spend the whole day working in the school. She also had some kind of status as ‘second mother’, responsible for disciplining the younger children, and Victoria came into this as another adult who was also able to tell the younger children off, and who was supposed to look after them.

About two weeks after the *Todos Santos* argument, Victoria went back to live with her mother. Doña Gregoria and I agreed that, although Carlos had “run off” from that house in anger, he hadn’t thought of the “pain” (“pena”, also despair) that it would cause for Doña Josefa, Victoria and Ángelo when Victoria moved all of a sudden. Furthermore, Virginia had finished school so was able to help her mother cook in the mornings.

Carlos finished his military service at the end of the year. Carlos intended to find work as a mechanic, after he had rested a bit from his military service. Victoria began selling in the Ceja, and applied to BancoMujer for a loan, despite Carlos’ fears about her ability to make the repayments⁷. Victoria was worried that she’d landed a workshy man (“un hombre que no trabaja”); and that she would have to maintain him. Her mother wanted her to continue at school, but she decided to go out to sell, for her son’s sake, saying “I think about what’s best for my son” (“yo pienso en mi hijo”). According to her, Doña Gregoria had said that Carlos should not work. Doña Gregoria said to me that she wanted Carlos to study, but “it seems as though the girl doesn’t want him to” (“parece que la chica no quiere”). This was to be a constant source of tension between the two parties/families for the next few months. According to Victoria and her mother, they had agreed to Carlos going for his military service because Doña Gregoria had said that he would begin working when he had finished. However, when he left the army and (rather desultorily) began looking for work as a mechanic, he was unable to find a job

⁷ She estimated that she earned 20-30 Bs a week, but wanted a loan of US \$150, the repayments for which are 72 Bs/week. In the event, she was not given the amount she applied for.

without having proof that he had graduated from school.⁸ So he and Doña Gregoria decided that he should go back to the local school, with Victoria earning for a couple of years, until he was able to get work and maintain her and Orlando. In theory she could then go back to school herself. Whether Victoria entirely agreed to this arrangement or not is hard to say.

Doña Gregoria could not understand why Victoria was not prepared to support her husband for two years until he finished school. She had given Victoria a loan to help her buy supplies to sell, and was prepared to support them through providing them with a home and food. According to her, the only thing Victoria had to buy under this arrangement was Orlando's clothes. Victoria and her family thought that Carlos was yet again trying to escape his responsibilities. Doña Gregoria thought he could not work in the afternoons while in school, since that was why he had to repeat a year. In her opinion, Victoria should encourage him in this, because it would eventually benefit her. If Carlos had not had a woman and child to look after, Doña Gregoria could have expected him to contribute something to her household when he worked, and she knew that this was no longer going to be the case, that he had other responsibilities.

The Irpaqa

Despite the already apparent differences of opinion, it was decided to formalise the relationship with an *Irpaqa* at the end of January.⁹ When I went over to Doña Gregoria's, she and Virginia were cooking, and I asked her what exactly would happen. She told me "we're going to buy Victoria" ("vamos a ir a comprar la Victoria"). They cooked *choclo* (corn), potato, *chunño*, yucca, meat and broad beans. It took the whole afternoon, and much of the evening. Carlos' godfather, who lived down in the city, arrived in the early evening and Carlos and Doña Gregoria filled him in on the situation. When everything was ready, we went over to my neighbours' house: Don Antonio is Victoria's uncle, husband to Doña Emiliana. We all sat in a circle in a little room. Victoria's godfather, Carlos' godfather, Carlos and Victoria sat on four chairs at one end of the room. As people came in, they shook hands with everyone present. Doña Gregoria and Don Lucio distributed coca, cigarettes, and popcorn.

⁸ Cf. Chapter 8, where I discuss the deflation of educational qualifications.

⁹ See Carter and Mamani (Carter and Mamani P 1989) for a description of a rural *Irpaqa*.

Then Carlos' godfather began to talk. He introduced himself and said that he thought it would be appropriate to discuss a date for the wedding, since the couple already have a son. Victoria's godfather (who is also her uncle) spoke after that, introduced himself as well, welcomed everybody, spoke about being Victoria's "spiritual father", and agreed on the necessity of a wedding. There followed a serious discussion with everyone agreeing that it was time to fix a wedding date, and they asked Carlos' opinion. He said that he needed money to organise the wedding, and said that it couldn't be next week or next month, or even in the next two years. This perturbed Victoria's family somewhat, and her godfather pointed out that it is the *padrino de matrimonio's* responsibility to pay for everything. Carlos' godfather began to calm things down by suggesting that they have a civil wedding and wait for the religious ceremony. Victoria's family were also concerned about the importance of her baby's legitimacy: if the two were not married, Orlando would only have 'reconocido' (recognised) on his birth certificate, which is where the father recognises paternity. Victoria also talked, and showed her anxiety to get married, which she said that they had discussed for March. Carlos then agreed that a civil wedding would be fine, backtracking by saying that he had perhaps not been clear before.

Then it was Doña Gregoria's turn, at which point she began talking in Aymara, saying that because it is their language and everyone understands, and Victoria's grandmother doesn't understand Spanish they should talk in Aymara. I relied on Virginia for translations of the Aymara, which she gave me a day later.¹⁰ Doña Gregoria said that they had not sorted out the situation "because of certain things that had happened". Both Virginia and Doña Gregoria explained to me later that this referred to a previous incident at a party when Victoria's relatives had attacked Carlos. Doña Gregoria said that as a result she became stubborn, and had this not happened, she said, she would have made Carlos marry Victoria before. At the *Irpaga*, Doña Josefa said that she was afraid that Carlos would leave Victoria, and that if he did, a civil marriage would be a guarantee for the baby. Her own mother wanted the two to live with neither Doña Gregoria nor Doña Josefa, but Victoria's godfather said that "the man has the right to take the woman where he wants" ("el hombre tiene el derecho de llevar a la mujer"). Carlos' godfather said they couldn't live on their own because they didn't have anything, not even a bedstead.

¹⁰ NB: Virginia did not approve of or get on with Victoria, so this report is likely to be rather one-sided. I have tried to compensate for this.

They then discussed arrangements, dates, and who would find the godfather for the couple's civil marriage. When all this had been discussed, Victoria's godfather said that since they were all together it would be a good idea to give "*orientaciones*" (advice) to the young couple. Doña Gregoria and Don Lucio at this point began to distribute soft drink.¹¹ The *orientaciones* were mostly in Aymara. It seemed rather a stressful experience for Victoria and Carlos; they had very serious faces throughout.

Virginia said that everyone told Carlos and Victoria to "live well" ("vivir bien"). She defined 'vivir bien' as "without fighting, without making each other cry" ("sin peleas, sin hacerse llorar"), because this would also bring problems for the child. The first person to offer advice was Carlos' uncle, Don Víctor, since he was the oldest man there, and, Virginia said, almost Carlos' grandfather ("casi su abuelo"). He told them not to fight, and told each of them not to come to him complaining about the other one. He also said that if they fight and make each other cry he would whip them ("yo les voy a dar su huasco"). He was followed by Don Antonio and Doña Emiliana. Don Antonio was Doña Josefa's representative (as a single mother, she needed a man to represent her), and the most senior man on that side of the family. As I describe later, this did not mean that he was particularly sympathetic to Doña Josefa's views and interests. He exhorted Victoria and Carlos to "walk well" ("que caminen bien"). He also said that he knew Carlos as a good person, because he always greeted them in the street with respect. He said that Victoria should not be lazy ("floja"), and that she should help her new mother and uncle (i.e. Doña Gregoria and Don Víctor). According to Virginia, Emiliana said that they shouldn't fight, and that Victoria should lose her bad characteristics ("estar sin su mal carácter").

Victoria's godfather, an Evangelical, then went up, with his wife. He spoke in Spanish, and said a prayer, at which Carlos' godfather, also an Evangelical, also stood up. The others remained seating. Victoria's godfather put his hands on both their heads, and asked Jesus to help them, in a very intense prayer. He then told them that if one gets angry ("renegar"¹²), the other should "lower their head" ("bajar la cabeza"), and that

¹¹ They did not bring alcohol to the *Irpaga* because they were concerned that it might inflame an already tense situation and could cause fights.

¹² 'renegar' is a very strong word, meaning 'complain', but with the connotation of complaining in anger and at length. It is commonly used with reference to when parents tell children off. Virginia's schoolfriends asked her what I was like when I 'renegaba'.

went for both of them: if she has a better idea, then he should accept that and vice versa. He said they should respect their new families. Carlos' godfather then spoke, focussing mainly on mutual support, not fighting, and communication, saying that was what their mouths were for ("para eso está la boca"). He also said to both that they must respect their new families. One of the godfathers also told both of them that they must tell the other one where they are going when they leave the house.

Then Doña Gregoria and Don Lucio went up. Apparently they also talked about not fighting. Don Lucio said that he didn't want to hear of Carlos hitting Victoria; and Doña Gregoria said that she didn't want to hear any complaints from either of them. Then Doña Josefa went up. She cried, and according to Virginia, she apologised about how she had talked to Carlos, explaining that she had been afraid that he would leave her daughter. He accepted her apology, saying that it was all behind them. Apparently, she also said to Victoria that she should respect her new mother, father, uncle, and sister; that she mustn't be "lazy, someone who raises her voice, a bit rebellious" ("floja, medio gritona, medio rebelde" in Virginia's words); she said that Victoria was wilful and should stop that. Finally, Victoria's grandmother spoke. Virginia said "she only said that they should live well" ("ella ha dicho solamente que vivan bien").

Then Doña Gregoria brought out the food. When they gave out the soft drink, they gave two cups to those of us without our partners there, including me, so that we could drink on their behalf. They then chatted generally, mostly in Spanish. When it was 2am, Don Antonio wrapped things up, because it was late. He told Doña Josefa to thank everybody. Doña Gregoria gave all the food that was left over to Doña Josefa. Everybody shook hands, and we took our leave. We came back to the house I stayed at, where the adults stayed (that is me, Doña Gregoria, Don Lucio and Carlos' godfather), and Carlos took the others home, and then returned, and we chatted until 3am, at which point I was tired, and went to my room.

Doña Gregoria said that "now it's no longer a game" ("ya no es juego"). She thought that Victoria should subject herself to her husband's will ("[estar] al mandato del hombre"); but it didn't happen. Instead Victoria demanded that Carlos wash his own clothes, and she didn't tell him where she was going when she left the house, for example. She thought that Victoria shouted and complained ("grita, reniega"), and wanted to order

Carlos about, but that it would be a good thing for them to live for at least one year under her supervision. When I asked why they could not live in a spare room in the family's second house, in which I rented a room, she said that they would fight, and they would have to get used to living with each other ("acostumbrarse"). She considered Victoria a little bit wilful ("un poquito caprichosa"), saying that her mother had not brought her up properly. She also thought that Victoria was lazy, and drew a contrast with Virginia, who was always busy. She, Don Lucio and Carlos' godfather discussed the fact that Victoria should be able to go and visit her mother, but that it would be better for her and Carlos to go together. They agreed that the change in living circumstances had to be "little by little; you don't change all at once" ("tiene que ser poco a poco; uno no se cambia de golpe"). Carlos' godfather again stressed the importance of dialogue, when Carlos had come back and joined in the conversation. I told Carlos that he shouldn't hit Victoria, and he said of course he wouldn't, but Doña Gregoria said that on occasion you have to raise your hand ("hay que levantar la mano").

Things then seemed to go well for a while. Victoria and Carlos lived with Doña Gregoria and the family, Victoria began selling in the Ceja, and attended her BancoMujer meetings. After a month, though, Victoria began to spend more time at her mother's house, and the tension between the two began to show again. Doña Gregoria became worried at the fact that Victoria treated Carlos badly: instead of encouraging him to find work, she accused him of being lazy and not wanting to work. There were other arguments: for example, Carlos didn't want to take Victoria to a school disco, so she went somewhere else in anger. I found out later that, according to Doña Josefa, when Carlos had refused to take Victoria to the disco, and she left in a huff, he closed the door of the room to her and would not allow her back in. Doña Josefa was most upset at this.

The next family meeting

At the beginning of April, things blew up again. Doña Josefa and her mother came over to Doña Gregoria's house to talk. Doña Josefa was very angry, since Carlos had been "lanzando su nombre" in arguments with Victoria. By this, she meant that he had been criticising her reputation. She felt that she was *conocida*, she'd lived in his house, even giving birth to Ángelo there, and she'd lived in the zone a long time, so he should not say things like that. She said that he should have thought before involving himself with Victoria, if he had such a low opinion of her (i.e. Doña Josefa). At the beginning, the discussion was just among women, that is myself, Victoria, Doña Gregoria, Doña Josefa,

and Doña Josefa's mother. Carlos arrived later, and then we went over to my house, where Don Lucio was working, to involve him in the decision-making.

Doña Josefa began by asking Carlos how he thought he and Victoria were getting on (whether they were "viviendo bien"); and he said that it was sometimes good and sometimes bad. However, she thought they were not getting on, and that they should separate: "if there is no understanding, you have to separate" ("si no hay entendimiento, hay que separarse"). She felt that Carlos had ruined her daughter, and nobody else would want her. The basic problem of Carlos not working was at the same time a source of friction between Carlos and Victoria and a problem for Doña Josefa, who was worried about how her daughter would be maintained, and would maintain Orlando, and who was herself bringing in most of the household's money. However, not only was Carlos not working, but he was, according to rumours, flirting with girls in school and going out to play table football without asking Victoria permission. He had also taken me rather than Victoria to the *Alasitas* fair at the end of January, which was a problem. It seemed as if he was just not committed to the relationship. Furthermore, he criticised what Victoria cooked for him, which everyone agreed was a particular insult for any woman.

The upshot was that they agreed on a separation, of four years. Doña Josefa agreed that Victoria was difficult, that, like her, "she always wants to get one over on a man" ("siempre sabe querer ganar al hombre") She said that she could educate Victoria while they were separated, so that she might become a better wife. She also asked that Carlos sign a document committing himself to maintenance payments. Carlos was unwilling to do this, but his father pressurised him, saying that he had to "sacrifice himself" ("sacrificarse"). Doña Josefa thought that formalising this would be better for the baby. The whole discussion, which lasted an afternoon, was particularly strained and upsetting for all concerned. Neither Carlos nor his parents were happy with the agreed outcome. I kept myself fairly non-committal, keeping off specifics, although I did say that I thought Carlos should fulfil his responsibilities to his child.

The following day, Victoria and her mother came to clear out Victoria's belongings, and move her back to her mother's definitively. Don Víctor said that he was surprised at the decision, since it was not as if Carlos had hit Victoria, or thrown her out, and Doña Emiliana apparently said much the same thing to Doña Josefa, scolding her for taking

Victoria away. Victoria said that she wanted to leave *before* Carlos began hitting her. Doña Gregoria hoped that both would come to their senses during the separation, and realise that living with a partner is not easy. After the separation period, they would be together again, but with more commitment.

Within a few days, though, another family meeting had been convened. I did not attend this one, but heard reports from Doña Gregoria and Don Roberto. It seems that Carlos, bothered about the maintenance payments, had been to see Don Antonio, who disapproved of Doña Josefa's actions, and had complained vigorously ("ha renegado harto"). He told Carlos not to sign anything, and arranged a meeting to discuss the matter, and put pressure on Josefa to bring Victoria to the meeting. Doña Gregoria took Don Roberto along, as a respectable family friend and outsider, who could provide some sort of independent corroboration of the discussions. Don Antonio brought along his nephew, Rubén, probably with a similar idea in mind. Both Don Roberto and Rubén are educated men with some status, although Rubén is still in University.

According to Doña Gregoria, there had been general agreement that because Victoria is the woman, she has to put up with the situation ("como mujer, tiene que aguantar"), particularly since Carlos had not actually mistreated her. They had to stay together, because people never love stepchildren as much as their own, and Orlando needed both parents. Don Roberto had said that they had to be tied together so that they didn't fight, which she thought a particularly good phrase. His report of the situation was similar. He thought the baby needed love from both parents, and that Carlos should fulfil his responsibilities as father, although not through maintenance payments. According to him, if a legal agreement were to come in force, Carlos would have to be given dates by the authorities for when he could see his baby, and if he could not pay every month, he risked prison.¹³ Don Roberto thought that they had to try to live together properly and get over their problems. He was angry at both of them for making their mothers cry, and threatened to beat them for this. He also pointed out that Carlos did not have to go to the school he was attending, but could attend an accelerated night school (called the CEMA) to complete two years in the space of one, and work at the same time. Both he and Rubén thought that Carlos should be working. Don Roberto thought Carlos was

¹³ I knew somebody who spent 6 months in prison for defaulting on maintenance payments.

machista (chauvinistic), and needed to learn about life and about sacrifice, and that Doña Gregoria was rather overprotective of her son. He thought both Carlos and Victoria needed to change.

Victoria moved back, but within a couple of weeks both had moved out again, to her mother's house, while Doña Gregoria, myself and my partner were in the *campo* helping one of her brothers with the harvest. Doña Gregoria accepted this as a *fait accompli* when we got back from our trip. I suspect that she was rather relieved to have them off her hands. Doña Josefa, much castigated, said to me later that Don Antonio and Doña Emiliana had asked her if she wanted her daughter to grow up like her, with children from different fathers. She said that she definitely didn't want her daughter to live like she had done ("caminar como yo"). Whatever she thought, she had to do what her family said: "they're my brothers and I can't do anything about it" ("son mis hermanos, y yo no puedo hacer nada"). Nonetheless, she was very upset at the thought of Carlos mistreating her daughter, especially when he refused to allow Victoria in his bed. She was angry that Carlos wasn't working, and she told me about Don Roberto's idea of Carlos going to the CEMA, and Rubén's anger at Carlos not maintaining his family. Frequently, throughout the time I was there, Don Antonio, Doña Emiliana and Rubén all asked me if Carlos had begun work yet. I was unfortunately never able to answer in the affirmative.

The 'final' incident

In the months that followed, Carlos and Victoria seemed to get along better. I would occasionally ask Victoria how they were managing when I saw her at BancoMujer meetings, and she said that they were arguing a bit less. Their's was certainly a tense relationship, but by this time everyone was more or less boxed in, particularly Doña Josefa, who had no-one to back her up in her desire for them to separate. This remained true even though in August Carlos provided her with perhaps the best ammunition possible, when he hit Victoria and made her nose bleed, in front of her cousins. Josefa was so angry with him that she threw him out of her house, with a broom. She thought that Victoria had changed because of Carlos, she had become more wilful, and more irritable, less happy. She asked Carlos, "if you don't like my daughter, why don't you go for good?" ("si no te gusta mi hija, porque no te vas definitivamente?"). She told me that she felt that it was better not to have a man around, and to be alone.

When Carlos hit Victoria, Doña Josefa said to him “are you married? Do you maintain my daughter?” (“acaso eres casado? Acaso mantienes a mi hija?”), implying that if he were and did, then he would be able to hit her. Doña Gregoria thought that Victoria had asked for it, and that Doña Josefa did not want them to “be proper people” (“estar gente”), but wanted them to separate. Doña Gregoria thought that Victoria continued to treat Carlos very badly: for example, at the Independence Day parade, she made Carlos hold Orlando while she ate her food before him. Virginia was also particularly upset at this incident, which humiliated Carlos in front of all his classmates, particularly the girls. Doña Gregoria told me that Victoria had refused to give him food sometimes, and other times said to him that he only came to her house to eat, and that she should charge him for the food. Josefa recognised Victoria’s faults, but didn’t think that either would change, so she thought it would be best to separate. If Victoria did not have another child, then she might be all right, since one child would not hold her back that much. Doña Gregoria said that she did not want to get involved, and thought that the two should sort it out between them.

Although for me the most important issue was the fact that Carlos had hit Victoria, and I told him so, this incident really seemed to bring out more the basic underlying tensions in their relationship, and the ways in which both mothers defended their own children to the hilt. By this time, attitudes had hardened on both sides: Carlos should work, and not flirt with other girls, and Victoria should show more respect, love and “tenderness” (“cariño”) to Carlos, especially with regard to preparing food for him. Carlos and Victoria themselves were both evasive whenever I spoke to them, although Victoria would tell me her fears about Carlos’ laziness. They seemed to feel just as boxed in as everyone else, and if there had been an alternative they would probably not have remained together. However, they were generally affectionate towards each other, and Carlos did try to help Victoria earn income, through minding the shop or ice cream machines.

Doña Gregoria, Doña Josefa, Carlos and Victoria met to talk about how Doña Josefa had thrown Carlos out for hitting Victoria. Carlos and Victoria did not want to separate, so they agreed to a short cooling off period of a couple of weeks. Doña Gregoria told me that Carlos had recognised his errors, and Victoria too. Both Doña Emiliana and Doña Gregoria told me that it was important for a woman to show love and tenderness to

men, and to put up with it, *aguantar*, if they hit you, and Virginia agreed. Doña Gregoria told me how she had never had any problems with her husband, because she knew how to be “al mandato del hombre”. She never gave him anything to complain about regarding her behaviour: for example, she did not go to the street and drink. If she was in mixed company, she would have a few cups to drink and then come back. The children always knew where she was, so that her husband could come to find her, and she would always be where she said. Don Lucio actually worked away from home for several weeks at a time.

Doña Emiliana said that Victoria had to put up with it, because that is what men are like (“tiene que aguantar – así son los hombres”). She blamed Doña Josefa, but did not want to get involved any more. She felt sorry for Carlos, because of having sons of her own. One of these sons just sighed when I told him about the incident, and said “why do these kids get together? I warned Victoria”. Everyone by this time seemed to be washing their hands of the couple. In fact, they were not the only couple I came across who had gone through such problems early on in their relationship. For example, another friend told me of her sister, who had initially had a similar experience: separating from her husband, getting back together, etc. In that case, the whole family had moved to be near them and supervise them.

Relational selves and kinship in practice

In the end, Carlos and Victoria got back together, and I heard from subsequent letters that they remained together, at least for a while. Since I left, there must have been many arguments, but it seems that there is, for the moment, no alternative for them. Nearly everyone agrees that they have to ‘estar gente’, which means be together. It means ‘become (or be) people’, and is Doña Gregoria’s translation of the Aymara for getting together as a couple, *jaqichaña*, which literally means making into people. The Spanish translation does not do full justice to the Aymara though, as the word for ‘people’ in this sense is *jaqi*. *Jaqi* refers to Aymara people, and is often opposed to *q’ara*, or white people/outside (Canessa 1998). For Victoria and Carlos to ‘be people’, i.e. be full persons, they needed to stay together. Doña Josefa was the only dissenting voice, but she recognised that she was not respectable in this sense herself, not a full person, so could not assert her opinions. Since she was only one half of a couple, she had to go along with

what her sister and her sister's husband said. She had no husband with whom to defend her own position. She attempted to use the state to balance this out, acting in this way as a formal citizen would be expected to do so, but was unsuccessful.

Observers have been struck by the centrality of the heterosexual couple and ideologies of gender complementarity to Andean cosmology, at least from Inca times (Silverblatt 1987), and to the present day (Carter and Mamani P 1989; Abercrombie 1998; Harris 2000 [1978]). Doña Gregoria once illustrated the importance of the couple to me by pointing out that even flies travel in pairs. The *chachawarmi*, or man-and-woman is a very important form of social organisation for Aymaras (Carter and Mamani P 1989; Harris 2000 [1978]). As mentioned, during the *Irpaga*, when the formal proceedings needed to be sealed by a drink, those of us without our partners there were given a glass to drink on their behalf as if 'completing' us, and in the period when my partner was not with me in Bolivia, I was frequently asked about him. The fact that we were not legally married was of little consequence to people: they assumed that we would do it when we had enough money, but meanwhile, we all referred to him as my husband. If I explained that we were not married, women would often tell me that we should get married, but in effect my partner was enough of a husband to give me some sort of respectability, even more so when he came out to join me for six months. Before he came, people in Rosas Pampa called me *Señorita*, or Miss, but after he arrived, I began to be *Señora*, Mrs. My childless status, though, meant that I was not entirely adult: once, Victoria said that I could celebrate Mothers Day because I was a 'future mother'. The contrast between us brings out a key paradox of Victoria's situation: she had adulthood ("mayoría de edad") because of being a mother, but needed to consolidate that by being married. In contrast, I was married (at least in an obviously stable relationship) and considerably older than Victoria, therefore reasonably respectable (I think); but also not fully adult yet, because I did not have children.¹⁴

Carlos and Victoria's story highlights a number of important issues around the behaviour expected from adult men and women as a couple, as well as the ways in which marriage is conceptualised and families regulate themselves.¹⁵ These in turn impact upon the ways

¹⁴ This chimed well with my presentation of myself as a student, and I think that many people thought I was younger than I was. I suspect that people assumed I would have children once I finish my studies.

¹⁵ For ethnographic overviews of Andean kinship, see Bolton (1977), Arnold (1988) and Carter & Mamani (1989).

in which people understand the self, and in the final sections of this chapter, I draw out the implications of this for their understandings of their citizenship.

The work of marriage

The individuals within a couple are imbricated in each other through their respective obligations as one half of the whole. In many ways, they are defined through that relationality expressed as obligation, in a similar way to the experience of community as compulsory. However, Carlos and Victoria's story illustrates how individuals contest those obligations, and have different ideas of what they are, just as the compulsory nature of community is often disputed. Clearly, one of the most important sources of conflict between the couple and their families was economic, specifically the fact that Carlos was not fulfilling his obligation to maintain his wife and child. Doña Josefa implied that it would be all right for him to hit her daughter if he actually worked. Everybody agreed that Carlos needed to work; and everyone, except for himself and his mother, thought that the choices he made were wrong, and rather lazy. Victoria herself realised that she might have landed a workshy man, and that she would be unlikely to become a housewife any time soon. Nonetheless, although many women call themselves 'housewives'¹⁶, it is extremely unusual to find a family that relies solely upon the man's income, and even if Carlos had been working, the economic situation was such that Victoria would have had to work too. As it was, many of Doña Josefa's 'explosions' of anger can be attributed to her fragile position as the only working adult in the household, and her feelings of responsibility to feed her children, son-in-law and grandchild. When she lost her job at the *Alcaldía*, and had no income, no benefits and no wages for the last three months of work, she found herself in an extremely precarious position, particularly since she paid rent for her one room rather than owning property. The shop that Victoria managed helped somewhat, but life was very hard. Victoria eventually came to the point where she blamed shortage of money for the arguments between her and Carlos. Certainly, poverty had much to do with their problems.

Yet the families' expectations for Carlos to work hard were not purely a response to poverty but also had cultural roots. Many people identified *altiplano* Bolivians, or *kollas*, to me by their hard-working nature, in contrast to *cambas* from Santa Cruz, who are notoriously lazy. Whereas in the *altiplano*, the men are able to work harder than the

¹⁶ 33% of over 16s in my survey. .

women, because they are stronger, in Santa Cruz it is the other way around. I have been told that women from Santa Cruz are particularly attracted to *kollas* because they are such hard workers. This characteristic was often attributed to the hardships of growing produce in the *altiplano*, as well as the climate itself: whereas it is sunny and warm in Santa Cruz, and anything will grow with very little effort, the *altiplano* is cold, harsh, and often unproductive. I was told that those from the department of La Paz are second only to those from the department of Oruro in their ability to work hard in harsh conditions. People are very proud of this: work is intrinsic to Aymara self-identity (Canessa 1998; Harris 2000). A man who does not work or provide for his family is not entirely respectable. It was difficult to explain to people the fact that my partner was able to come to Bolivia because he had such a long a sabbatical from his job and did not need to work. However, when he set to work helping Don Lucio make adobe bricks almost as soon as he'd arrived, there were many approving comments about what a hard worker he was, and it reflected well on me too.

While the man in a couple should work and make a proper effort, which involves 'sacrifice', and giving up his own desires, women's responsibilities were primarily around reproduction, and this is not supposed to be easy. Virginia said that babies are "the responsibility of the woman: that's why women have babies, to suffer" ("[son la] responsabilidad de la mujer: por eso tienen las wawas las mujeres, por sufrir"), revealing her Catholic views. Don Roberto (the catechist), who was in many ways her mentor, said something similar to me, referring to Eve's punishment. Women's central responsibility was cooking: women I knew often talked about how their husbands scolded them if they didn't cook for the family. One time, a lady told me a story of how she was late, and was terribly worried that her husband would get angry at her for not cooking lunch, but, to her relief, her mother had stepped in and her husband never found out. When Carlos criticised Victoria's cooking, all her female relatives thought that was very cruel of him. For Aymaras, cooking has always been seen as women's work: under the Incas, women went on *mita* service in order to cook for the men. For the Laymis of Northern Potosí, the quintessential female activity is to take the man his *merienda*, or lunch, when he is working in the fields, corresponding to the male activity of ploughing with bulls (Harris 2000 [1978]).

When Victoria refused to cook for Carlos one time that she was angry, Doña Gregoria was especially upset. Women frequently refuse to cook for their husbands when they're angry with them, which is a particularly effective tactic, since what is important is not the fact that he will be hungry, but the strength of disapproval they show and the loss of face he suffers if other people find out. Of course, many men are good at cooking, and different couples have different arrangements, but when I told people that my partner cooks for me, I could tell they thought we were strange. It was not only the cooking that was a source of conflict between Victoria and Carlos, and a means or motive for criticising Victoria, but also the eating of food. Virginia and Doña Gregoria were particularly horrified the time that Victoria made Carlos hold Orlando while she ate, and before he had had a chance to eat his lunch, in front of all his classmates. They were very hurt that she could do this to their brother/son, particularly in public. This was evidence of her wilfulness. Arrangements over the provision of food played a central part in the ways in which people explained relationships to me, for example with regard to the spirits, as described in the previous chapter. Perhaps through giving food to the spirits people are invoking the relationship between husband and wife held together and symbolised by her responsibility to feed him, and his responsibility to work for her. Penelope Harvey argues that both relationships (human-spirit and husband-wife) are conceived of as mutual consumption. The feeding nexus between husband and wife is underlined by the connections made between eating and having sex, particularly in jokes (Harvey 1994). Carlos' refusal to allow Victoria into his bed one time and her refusals to provide food for him (or at least to provide food for him with good grace) were therefore perhaps about the same thing.

Another domestic task that caused problems was washing clothes. One of Victoria's biggest crimes in her mother- and sister-in-law's eyes was that she wouldn't wash Carlos' clothes. This was rather an odd complaint, since in nearly every family I knew, and Doña Gregoria's was no exception, individuals who were considered old enough (usually those older than about 8) always washed their own clothes, including the male head of household. Doña Josefa complained that Carlos did not help with washing Orlando's clothes. The point is not about the practicalities of getting clothes clean, although it is a

very unpleasant and time-consuming task¹⁷; but more about appearances and also about the nature of a young relationship. You can tell if someone has been washing clothes recently because their hands are red, and Don Roberto told me that many men will rub mud on their red hands to make it look like they have been making adobes, rather than admitting that they have been clothes-washing. This may or may not be true. However, Victoria perhaps had not grasped the fact that she should have been sensitive to these kinds of sensibilities at least during the initial stages of their relationship, especially given Carlos' *machista* tendencies.

Victoria and Carlos were very young, and not economically secure. If they had had more resources of their own, they might have been able to live away from both sets of parents, and this was certainly a solution that Doña Josefa favoured, at least initially. But she was persuaded out of it because they did not even have a bedstead of their own. Some people prepare for this early: a friend told me of her nephew, who, at 14, had been working for a few years and had managed to buy all the equipment he would need. He was ready for marriage, since he had a bedstead, blanket, everything. Becoming a couple is in many ways an economic arrangement. Marriage (whether formally consecrated in church or not) creates the economic unit, the citizen in the market place. Even where the woman in a couple designate herself a housewife it is the couple that is the basic income-generating unit. This explains the families' keenness for Victoria and Carlos to stay together just as much as any cultural issues. The families wanted the two of them to be able to maintain themselves and Orlando – hence all the tensions that resulted from Carlos' refusal to work. Doña Josefa thought that she would be able to manage with just Victoria and Orlando, but Carlos, and the possibility of another grandchild, were really too much for her.

The economic arrangement is not simply about the market, however, but defines the model of personhood as *chachawarmi*. As the following chapter will show, the *chachawarmi* is the basis for economic citizenship in Bolivia. Full persons are created through their relationships, which are based in an ideal-type household model of production and consumption: the man works while the woman cooks/feeds (which is also work), for

¹⁷ Washing clothes takes hours. Because there is no hot water, cold water has to be left to heat up in the sun, in deep metal trays, then clothes are be soaked, scrubbed, and rinsed two or three times by hand. It is painful on the hands, particularly when it is cold.

example. In the Northern Potosí *campo*, a specific division of labour underpins the *chachawarmi* ideal: women herd and, on the principle that labour defines ownership, own sheep and goats, while men mind the llamas; men plough and women sow; and weaving responsibilities and skills are also divided by gender (Harris 2000 [1978]: 170-171). The close association of labour and property rights, combined with the fact that in *altiplano* agriculture human energy must be used to maximum efficiency, frame an ideology of equity. In the city, the search for equitable complementarity is not underwritten by such well-defined economic relations. Women's earning power through commerce can often be greater than men's, especially when there are very few jobs available; women may also have greater access to small loans and other benefits provided by NGOs, discussed in the following chapter. But the man is supposed to be the main breadwinner. From the viewpoint of Victoria and her family, Carlos' feeling that he was contributing as he should by graduating from school so that he could earn more money later on was highly questionable, especially since it was by no means certain that he would earn a better wage as a high school graduate. Nonetheless, Victoria had to put up with whatever Carlos decided, although she did in the end prevail in the dispute over where they should live.

Violence and communication

What galled Carlos' female relatives most was the feeling that Victoria didn't love him. Certainly everyone placed a high premium on the responsibility a woman has to show love and tenderness (*cariño*) to her husband. This is very much connected with her responsibility to feed him, but also with what she says: Victoria's tendency to shout at Carlos, accusing him of being lazy and insulting him, frequently upset his mother. Doña Gregoria felt that, rather than complaining that he wasn't working, Victoria should have been encouraging him to go out and find work. Doña Josefa agreed that Victoria complained too much and was not submissive or encouraging enough to Carlos; and Doña Emiliana was sympathetic to Carlos, since she had sons of her own.

During the *Irpaqa orientaciones* and after, people also placed a high premium on communication between the couple. For example, Victoria's *padrino* said during the *Irpaqa* that both had to look down and keep quiet ("bajar la cabeza") if the other one was shouting. However, this studied equality fell down in practice, and Carlos was more easily able to convince everyone that he was not being listened to. Doña Gregoria commented after the *Irpaqa* that Victoria now had to do what her husband said, and was "al mandato del hombre", maintaining that she was able to be 'al mandato de [su] hombre [Don

Lucio]'. In fact, I always thought that she made a good deal of the decisions in the household, largely because Don Lucio worked away from home, and because he had such an easy-going personality. It is not uncommon for the woman to make many of the decisions in and regarding the household, and to 'give the orders' (Harris 2000 [1978]). Nonetheless, Doña Gregoria had to appear to cede to his will, and I suspect that things change as relationships progress and age. Carlos and Victoria, who were both very young, had to manage these ambiguities: on the one hand they were told that both had to ask permission from the other to go out, both had to shut up while the other one was shouting or complaining, they had to share, etc. On the other hand, Carlos was able to flex his *machista* muscles and expect to dominate, even though in reality the older men were not quite as crass in this as he was.

It is in this context that he punched Victoria and made her nose bleed, provoking her mother to throw him out of her house temporarily. Victoria herself said that she had provoked him, she had been nagging and shouting. The support for Carlos was somewhat incongruous with earlier comments when Victoria wanted to leave, and when Carlos' uncle, for example, said that they didn't need to separate, since it wasn't as if Carlos had hit her. In many other conversations I had with people, they disapproved of domestic violence in an abstract sense, and when talking about other people. But Doña Gregoria thought that, on occasion, it was necessary for a husband to "raise his hand" ("levantar la mano") to his wife, although she claimed that her own husband had never done so. Another woman who was part of a very loving and close couple said that in the early years her husband used to beat her when he got angry, and that Victoria should *aguantar* (cf. Harris 1994; Harvey 1994; Harris 2000 [1978]).

Domestic violence is clearly not viewed as an absolute issue. It depends on the level of violence and the situation of the children in the family, being for many especially bad if the man is also violent towards the children. However, it is also something that men can in theory grow out of, or decide to stop. I was once told a story about a Mother's Club, where a woman suffered from extreme beatings by her husband. When he tried to set fire to her, the leader of the Mother's Club and the *mestiza* facilitator went round and told him to stop. A few weeks later the wife came to the leader and the facilitator to express her gratitude, because her husband had not touched her. As far as the person who told me the story knew, they were still together and he hadn't beaten her since. Although one

should probably be sceptical about the exact veracity of the story, it does indicate that disapproval from outside the household is seen as a potentially strong motivating factor for better behaviour, and that violence (or at least extreme violence) is not viewed as an especially inherent part of masculinity, because men can stop.¹⁸ It also perhaps hints at the influence of women's NGOs in the city and their campaigns against domestic violence, which focus on stigmatising violent men and 'consciousness-raising' among women.¹⁹ On the other hand, many women do suffer regular domestic violence, and it is viewed as normal for a husband to beat his wife, certainly in the early stages of their relationship (Harris 1994; Harvey 1994; Harris 2000 [1978]).

Violence against women clearly undermines the complementarity of the *chachawarmi* relationship, since at the very least it is a means by which men as social group collectively oppress women (Harris 2000 [1978]). But, like it or not, it is also considered a part of a normal relationship, that also involves mutual love, giving, sharing, and working together (Harris 1994). The incongruity is made comprehensible if we understand that complementarity need not mean equality, and is in fact a hierarchical concept. In the affinal relationship between husband and wife, hierarchy is contested, in contrast to the hierarchical relationships between parents and children and older and younger siblings, which are (ideally) less contested. These differences are important for the regeneration of life:

Andean complementarity is essentially a hierarchical notion. The bringing together of distinctive elements to form the complementary whole is confrontational however because the hierarchy is not the prescribed, respectful, trusting hierarchy of kinship but the achieved hierarchy of conquest.

The regenerative power that the complementary whole embodies is predicated on this joining of difference. Affinity is necessary because there can be no regeneration through kinship alone. ... Hierarchy within marriage must thus contain but not negate, difference. (Harvey 1994: 76)

The difference between the two sets of relationships is further underlined by the feeding relationships within them: affinity involves mutual consumption while kinship involves feeding someone who does not feed you (Harvey 1994, 1996). This is how people live

¹⁸ Women can also be violent themselves, as the incident at *Todos Santos* showed.

¹⁹ Obviously the campaigns are more subtle than this summary implies. In Latin America, the women's movement's campaign on Violence Against Women has been very influential in the last decade. As a result of the lobbying efforts of women's NGOs, many countries, including Bolivia, have established legislation on domestic violence, and NGOs assist female victims of violence to bring legal cases against their aggressors (Molyneux and Lazar forthcoming).

their emplacement in kin networks, and thereby community: contested and hierarchical, such embeddedness should not be taken for granted.

Affinity versus kin

This section further illustrates the ways in which Carlos and Victoria's specific emplacement in their kin networks determined the strategies they could use to resolve their differences, thus shaping their agency. Penelope Harvey's distinctions help us to understand some of the dynamics of their story. She argues that women endure violence principally so that they are able to provide a full set of parent-child kin relationships for their children. The most important thing for Carlos and Victoria's families was to save the relationship for the sake of their child. Everyone, even Josefa, agreed that Orlando needed his father, and that a stepparent would not love him as much as his real parents. Much effort was put into maintaining the kin link between parents and child, and it was an important issue for the respectability of the mother in particular. Doña Josefa's status as single mother meant that both her family and Carlos' family disapproved of her. Not that they disliked her or did not respect her personally: as she pointed out when she complained about Carlos questioning her reputation ("lanzando su nombre"), she is *conocida*, and they have always greeted her politely in the street, as she is polite and respectful to them. Doña Josefa had been abandoned, and as such she was deserving of the sympathy accorded to women deserted by their husbands. But when she tried to encourage her daughter to actively choose single motherhood, she was widely condemned. Victoria's position was interesting: on the one hand, there were clearly some who thought she was a bit of a slut, but, on the other, she was not necessarily at fault, given her mother's character.²⁰ And she was attempting to do the right thing, namely get married, legitimate her child and look after him properly. However, Doña Josefa was by no means the worst kind of woman. That designation was reserved for women who abandoned their own children. I met a farmer whose wife had left him for another man, leaving him to look after the two children. The woman who told me this story said "what kind of conscience does that woman have?" ("¿que tipo de conciencia tiene esa mujer?"); another time Doña Josefa and Doña Emiliana were discussing similar women, saying that they absolutely should stay with their children. It was just as bad for men to abandon

²⁰ Although there was a strong emphasis on the need for Osvi to have both his mother and father, Victoria's behaviour was never attributed to the absence of a father figure in her life. Doña Josefa once said to me that she thought that this was more of an issue for Alvaro, because, being a boy, he particularly missed having a father. This made it all the more important that her grandson not lose his father.

their children, but somehow more expected, and more usual. Women who did this were aberrant characters, which was not the case for men, although their behaviour was not entirely acceptable.

The affine/kin distinction also highlights some of the problems that arose with Victoria and Carlos' place of residence, and Victoria's relationships with her mother- and sister-in-law. Certainly, relations with affines, particularly the husband's family, are notoriously tense, as the in-marriage wife "is expected to respect the authoritarian unnegotiable hierarchy of her husband's kin group yet she is never fully assimilated as kin" (Harvey 1994: 76). Harvey argues that women will often turn to their husband's kin when they have a problem, because they have more authority over him than the woman's own family. This puts women in an ambiguous position, though, as they will never be fully accepted as kin by their husbands' families (Harvey 1994). Victoria's problems may have been exacerbated by the fact that she did not do this, but tended to turn more to her mother. In contrast, Carlos was prepared to appeal to her kin, as he did when he went to speak to Don Antonio about the maintenance arrangements.

All agreed, during the *Irpaga* and subsequently, that it was the man's right to take the woman where he wanted; and Carlos attempted this. His mother thought that it was important for her to supervise the young couple and make sure that they stayed together. She thought they could not even move into a room in the house where I stayed (my room in fact) because they would fight too much and separate. Others pointed out that they did not have enough things in order to live separately from one or other of the mothers. There was also an undertone that Doña Josefa was not entirely a suitable guardian for the two of them, particularly since she often worked extremely late in the evenings. But living with one's mother-in-law was a constant source of trauma or irritation for the women I knew. In the micro-credit group meetings I attended, I heard many complaints about mothers-in-law, including rumours of one young woman whose husband on occasion denied that he was father to her baby, and was backed up by his mother. Doña Gregoria did not want to be like the bad mothers-in-law she had gossiped about in the past, not least because the same situation was likely to happen to her own daughter in the future. It surprised me that Virginia was not more sympathetic to her new sister-in-law at the times when Carlos and Victoria lived with Doña Gregoria, since she was facing the prospect of having to live with a mother-in-law herself. She looked

forward to having a sister-in-law to help her with the housework and the cooking, and she enjoyed looking after her nephew. She told me that it was a good thing that the man had the right to take the woman to his house, because it was traditional: if they lived in the woman's house, then there would have to be an *Irpaga* for the man, where the woman's family bought him, rather than the other way round.

The evident difficulties of living with the man's family raise two issues: first, the strength of the mother-son relationship, particularly between mother and eldest son; secondly, the responses or tactics available to women in this situation. Doña Emiliana's sympathy for Carlos instead of her own niece, because she has sons of her own, is instructive. Similarly, on many occasions I saw mothers defending their children, particularly their sons, to the hilt: although other adults could discipline their children, if there were any dispute between the children, then the parents would automatically be just as partisan. When my partner's mother came to visit us, Doña Gregoria explained it by the fact that a mother will always sacrifice herself to come and look after her son and see how he is doing. Don Roberto, who only has a daughter, thought that Carlos was a bit spoilt, and that Doña Gregoria was overly protective of him.

So whenever Victoria raised her voice, she 'mistreated' probably the most valued child in that family, the eldest son. Living with his mother was always going to be a difficult situation. Faced with this prospect, some women almost deliberately pick men without families: Doña Gregoria maintained that this was what she had done, and she connected it to the fact that, according to her, her husband had never been violent towards her. Another friend told me that she 'bought' her husband in their *Irpaga* instead of the other way around, because his family was in debt, and his parents in ill health. This is probably also a good strategy to avoid any difficulties.

Family regulation and the role (/ absence) of the state

Again, the discussion of family regulation in this section illustrates the importance of emplacement in kin networks for agency, but I contrast it with the (disputed) involvement of the state. Here I move to address more formal citizenship questions, arguing that involving the state represents the failure of emplacement. It implies a different, and ultimately in this case incompatible, conception of the self as bounded individual with rights and responsibilities as recognised in law, a 'citizen' in a legalistic sense. In the end, both families' viewpoints came down to telling the couple that they

had made their bed and should lie in it, together. Victoria did seem to be in the weaker position, not only because of being female, but also because she did not have two parents prepared to take her side. While Doña Josefa thought that Carlos did not love her daughter, she was not in a good position to fight her corner. During the whole year I was there, family was absolutely crucial to the regulation and maintenance of their relationship, from supervising Orlando's birth, to the *Irpaqa*, and the various other collective discussions over what the couple would do. One time, Doña Gregoria told me that she had talked to one of the teachers at the school, someone who had agreed to become godmother to one of her children, either for the youngest's baptism or for Carlos' marriage. This teacher said to her that the two should sort it out by themselves, and that the relatives should not involve themselves ("meterse") – "is it as if they're going to live with the relatives?" ("¿acaso van a vivir con los familiares?"). There was no question in anybody's mind, though, that immediate family would be involved; and this extended to me as *comadre* to Doña Gregoria and member of the household – she told me that I should tell Carlos of my disapproval when he hit Victoria, for example.²¹

As the incidents related above show, both families took responsibility for making sure that Victoria and Carlos stayed together. The various rituals and meetings were a means of making decisions that were in theory binding, unless superseded by another family discussion. These forms of family regulation, and the *Irpaqa* in particular, closely followed models derived from the *campo* (see Carter and Mamani P 1989). Victoria was surprised when I told her that there was nothing like an *Irpaqa* when I got together with my partner: it was important for her that her relationship be formalised, even after she had had her son. They knew that they would need time to save money for a wedding, and the *Irpaqa* was the first formal ceremony of the process of getting together, and becoming people. Victoria was always particularly concerned that she do things properly and respectably. The *Irpaqa* was the means by which the two families could get together and give their support for a decision made by the two children. It was also a way for the young couple to formally commit to each other. The whole evening had a special feeling of ritual and ceremony: people asked permission before speaking, we chewed coca, ate popcorn, *ch'alla'd*, drank soft drink for ourselves and for absent partners, discussed politics and ate copious amounts of food. The food provided was very impressive, showing Doña Gregoria's commitment to the ritual. The two families were formalising

²¹ Lambert (1977) points out the importance of godparents mediating between parents and children.

an alliance on that night, and building one of the kin networks that underpins the experience of collectivity and citizenship in Rosas Pampa.

The subsequent discussions were problem-solving exercises. Although not quite as ceremonial, they were very serious and formal, particularly when they brought in semi-independent witnesses. That meeting was perhaps an important one, since it was a crucial moment when Doña Josefa wanted to bring in the state authorities to formalise arrangements for child support, but the rest of her family as well as Carlos' family colluded to prevent this from happening. The dispute in part divided along gender lines. It was not only Carlos who resisted that formalisation, he was backed up by most of the men brought in to discuss the issue. In contrast to the more usual association of the man with the 'public' sphere, in this instance state provisions favoured the women, and Victoria and Doña Josefa were keen to use them. Possibly also the men were unwilling to appeal to the state authorities because they represented an admission before a higher male authority that the men had been unable to keep control of household affairs (Harvey 1994).

It is also the case that Doña Josefa was not as dislocated from the state as the rest of her family and Carlos' family. She had worked in the *Alcaldía* and was more comfortable with the authorities than the others. In a similar way, Doña Josefa had wanted to take Victoria to the hospital during her labour, but had been over-ruled. In both incidents, the families were concerned to regulate their affairs personally, viewing the involvement of the state as a last resort. Doña Josefa was seeking to act more like a 'citizen', to use legal provisions to protect her daughter's interests, through legalising custody, separation and child maintenance arrangements. Victoria was caught in the middle. She knew that she would be in a weak position until she was formally married, precisely because of the legal situation. Informal kin-based negotiation would not necessarily be enough to protect her position and ensure that Carlos support his child. However, even a civil marriage would probably not be enough either. Virginia thought that even a civil marriage could be broken, if necessary: for her, a church marriage was sacred, and the biggest commitment to the relationship.

Aguantar, Sacrifice and Citizenship

In this final section, I move out further to suggest that the relationship between husband and wife is also a model for other relationships that involve power. In this way, values

associated with intimate relationships influence people's understanding of politics, and thereby their citizenship. The principal values I consider here are mutual assistance (working: cooking/feeding), mutual sacrifice for the sake of the household and the violence/*aguantar* dialectic. Both Victoria and Carlos were expected to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their child. Carlos of course had more freedom, since the man can go out to play table football, or drinking with friends, even eventually have discreet affairs, but he also had to learn to work. Don Roberto felt that men who do not want to 'sacrifice themselves' are *machistas*; Don Lucio felt his son ought to sacrifice himself in order to maintain his family. Victoria was no longer allowed to be a child, and had given up her own studies pretty much definitively. She similarly had to sacrifice herself for her child, and she also had to submit to Carlos' right to hit her if she had been wrong: as her Aunt said to me "that's what men are like, she has to put up with it" ("así son los hombres, tiene que aguantar")

There are continuities between relationships of family and kin and the relationship with government which in part invokes the violence-*aguantar* pair. I think that being able to, or having to, *aguantar* (endure) is an extremely important value for the people I met, and I heard it in a number of contexts. From the ability to work hard because people from the department of La Paz can 'aguantar mucho' (endure a lot) to women having to *aguantar* violence from their husband for the sake of the child, it is perhaps a key aspect of life in El Alto. Once, when I was walking with Doña Gregoria across the railway, and the smell of rubbish and faeces was particularly acute, she said to me "how can the people who live here put up with it?" ("¿Cómo la gente que vive aquí puede aguantar?"). It occurred to me that a rights-based citizenship culture relies upon people not *aguantando* or putting up with things, but complaining and demanding improvements. The political implications of not demanding, or being able to demand, sanitary living conditions, and the historical exploitation of *altiplano* people as hard workers are both linked by the concept of *aguantar* with women's attitude to violence within the home. The active, demanding citizen, with the full complement of exercisable rights cannot exist where endurance is a primary value.²²

²² By this I do not mean to disparage the value of *aguantando*: being able to bear much is an important characteristic and a source of pride for Aymara people. It may also be an effective response to centuries of colonial exploitation.

Conclusions

Kin networks and alliances are the foundation of community in Rosas Pampa. Becoming full members of such networks is crucial to Victoria and Carlos' status as *vecinos* and adult persons. To do so, they must ideally stay together. Most people viewed keeping them together not as the responsibility of the state, but of the networks themselves, with the exception of Doña Josefa, who attempted to use both. Her job at the *Alcaldía* meant that she was much less reluctant to involve the state than everyone else. Her attempts to do so may also be attempts to compensate for the fact that because she was single she was not entirely a full person herself. Whatever strategies Victoria and Carlos could use to improve their situation are determined by their place in their kinship network. Hence the relative success of Carlos' strategy of appealing to his affinal kin (Don Antonio) in contrast to Victoria's attempted appeals to her direct kin (her mother) and the state. Their emplacement in a kinship network also determined any 'rights and responsibilities' they had towards each other. Hence also the strong focus in the *Irupaqa* orientations on the behaviour of the young couple in relation to their new families, with the exception of the advice given to them by the Evangelicals present. Their increased emphasis on the one-to-one relationship between Victoria and Carlos perhaps illustrates the difference in their understandings of the self, which I discussed in Chapter 5.

The ways in which women and men are conceived of as separate but imbricated in each other because of the feeding (and sexual) nexus is reflected in the relationship between humans and the spirits described in the previous chapter. This relational self does not easily fit with the conceptualisation of the person as a bounded individual possessing a determined set of rights and entitlements that underlies Liberal citizenship theory. Yet talking about responsibilities as Communitarian theorists (and politicians) do also fails to capture the sense of obligation. People do not *have* either rights or responsibilities, because they do not conceive of the self in a property-owning, or commoditised, framework (Strathern 1988). Instead, people *are* their responsibilities, which are defined in relation to others and conceived of as mutually reinforcing and compatible. Of course, in practice this is not actually the case, and the struggles that the families went through to keep Victoria and Carlos together show that even within the couple these relationships do not go uncontested. Thus, in an important sense, this chapter's ethnography of kinship has demonstrated that dominant understandings of the self in contemporary

Rosas Pampa conform neither to Liberal nor to Communitarian notions of the self and the individual. So the ways in which citizenship theory conceptualises the relationship between the individual and the collective are shown to be inadequate.

CHAPTER 7

EDUCATION FOR CREDIT

This chapter discusses one set of citizenship projects operating in Rosas Pampa, which attempt to modify the ways in which individuals are embedded in their communities. It is a necessary complement to the previous chapter in which I outlined the relational self at work in central social practices relating to marriage and childbearing. I argued that Carlos and Victoria's experiences show how salient and influential are Aymara values concerning the involvement and interest of the wider kin-group in the development of a new marriage. However, other forces are at work in Rosas Pampa, derived from transnational discourses of active citizenship conceived in an individualised neoliberal framework. This chapter follows Victoria to her micro-credit group and discusses the interaction between kinship/*vecino*-based values and a top-down project that attempts to change women's understandings of their own personhood, creating them as individual citizens with market-based notions of their economic agency. Then chapter 8 will follow Carlos to school, a similar but perhaps more sustained example of citizenship as a project of personhood.

I develop one of the key themes of the previous chapter, namely the issue of income-generation, which caused such problems between Victoria and Carlos. This requires an analysis of the informal economy, which has increasingly become the target of governmental concern over the last three decades. The domain of the informal economy has become one of the key fields in which differing conceptions of individuality and the self are worked on by local people, the state and international agencies. Policies now seek to measure and formalise what is already there in the informal sector, making it 'legible', in James Scott's term (1998), and harnessing its benefits for the formal sector. In the last decade, micro-credit NGOs for women have become one of the most important spaces where these projects of government (Rose 1999, 2000) operate. Their focus on entrepreneurial activity operates on the assumption of an economic rationality that is market-based, and is combined with capacity-building in a 'human development' model. This combination tells us much about the kinds of female citizens that governments and development agencies seek to create, namely (crudely), 'empowered' individual, entrepreneurial, active citizens who will take responsibility for their own and their families' welfare, and who are prepared for the market rather than the state to provide

for them. However, such projects are undermined in two main ways: first, because the women's responses to the educational components are complex and not always accepting; and second, because the NGOs themselves in fact rely upon a collective, embedded economic rationality of kinship and social control (based on *vecino* ties) to ensure the re-payment of loans. Once again I shall argue that the individualising ambitions of external agencies are imbricated in local relationships and collectivities.

Gender and family strategising in the informal economy

In this section, I describe the informal economy of Rosas Pampa and El Alto and highlight the importance of kinship ties for people's economic strategies. I argue that the economy is embedded in social networks but also operates on very strict market-based principles of supply and demand. I then connect this to the economic dimension of citizenship, discussing the late 20th century shift away from the state as principal guarantor of social rights (through clientelist networks in the Latin American case) to contemporary doctrines of market-based provision of social services. Before moving to investigate one of the ways this change is implemented, I discuss some of its implications for the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa. This is an absolutely central element to any analysis of *cholo* citizenship because the informal economy is not only the main field for these citizenship projects but also the core area of *cholo* economic activity, even defining the *cholo* (especially the *chola*), as I showed in Chapter 1.

There is a substantial body of literature that attempts to define the 'informal sector', much of which ends up by admitting the impossibility of definitions that adequately capture our intuitive understandings of the term (Goddard 1996; Rivera Cusicanqui, Arnold et al. 1996; Ypeij 1999). I broadly define the informal economy as characterised by small-scale production or vending, unregulated and untaxed by government, with people mostly self-employed rather than receiving a wage. The most important thing to point out in any discussion of formal and informal economies is the impossibility of making an absolute distinction between the two. One object can go through both the formal and informal sectors, for example, being produced on a contract basis in order to be exported and sold in regulated shops; or vice-versa if something is produced in regulated factories, but sold in markets that are unregulated and untaxed. In many ways, the formal, waged, sector relies upon the informal sector, either to produce goods

cheaply or to provide cheap services (such laundry, meals or accommodation) for its workers (Albó 1982; Ypeij 1999).

Families in Rosas Pampa did not make a distinction between the two: they were just different ways of making a living, and families had members operating in both formal and informal sectors; they had 'legals' and 'extralegals'.¹ Unsurprisingly, the choice of who would be legal and who would be extralegal within a family had everything to do with gender and age. Young people and women were most likely to be self-employed or, in the case of the young people, if they earned wages they earned them off the books, in sweatshops in Brazil or Argentina or small craft workshops in El Alto. The majority of vendors in the markets of El Alto are women.² For women in El Alto, the most common formal employment would probably be running a shop that pays sales tax, which has what is called a RUC³ number. However, none of the shops in Rosas Pampa had registered for their RUC, largely because, as one shop owner pointed out to me, nobody had checked up on them, nor were they likely to in the future. People are likely to register if the amount of official visits, and bribes to avoid having to register for the RUC, become more onerous than paying tax. Currently that is not the case.

Informal employment for older men was usually in construction, for example, building houses for friends or family; or as market vendors, or artisans (carpenters, mechanics and so on). However, much employment for men operates at the edge of the formal economy, such as taxi-driving and bus-driving, where the fares they can charge are regulated, but drivers are self-employed, and do not generally pay taxes. Male waged labour, for example on road-building programmes or in factories, is often on a contract only basis, and may or may not be on the books. A common type of formal employment for men in Rosas Pampa was as truck drivers, a profession that was 'brought in' to the formal sector during the 1990s through simplifications of tax legislation which enables drivers to claim expenses against their tax.⁴

¹ Terminology from Hernando de Soto (1989; 2000)

² Silvia Escobar (1989) shows that, in 1983, women were the majority (71%) of those engaged in small-scale commerce in La Paz. See also Silvia Rivera (Rivera Cusicanqui, Arnold et al. 1996).

³ Registro Unico de Contribuyentes, Single Register of Contributors.

⁴ If the drivers collect enough receipts for expenses, then they don't pay any tax. This legislation is basically a means to encourage the official receipt system. You can buy products in Bolivia either with or without an official receipt, called a *factura*, which can then be set against tax if you have a RUC number. For the shop owner selling the product, the *factura* is used to calculate the amount of sales tax they owe. Therefore, only a very few shops provide a *factura* for every transaction. Any vendor that does not have a RUC number

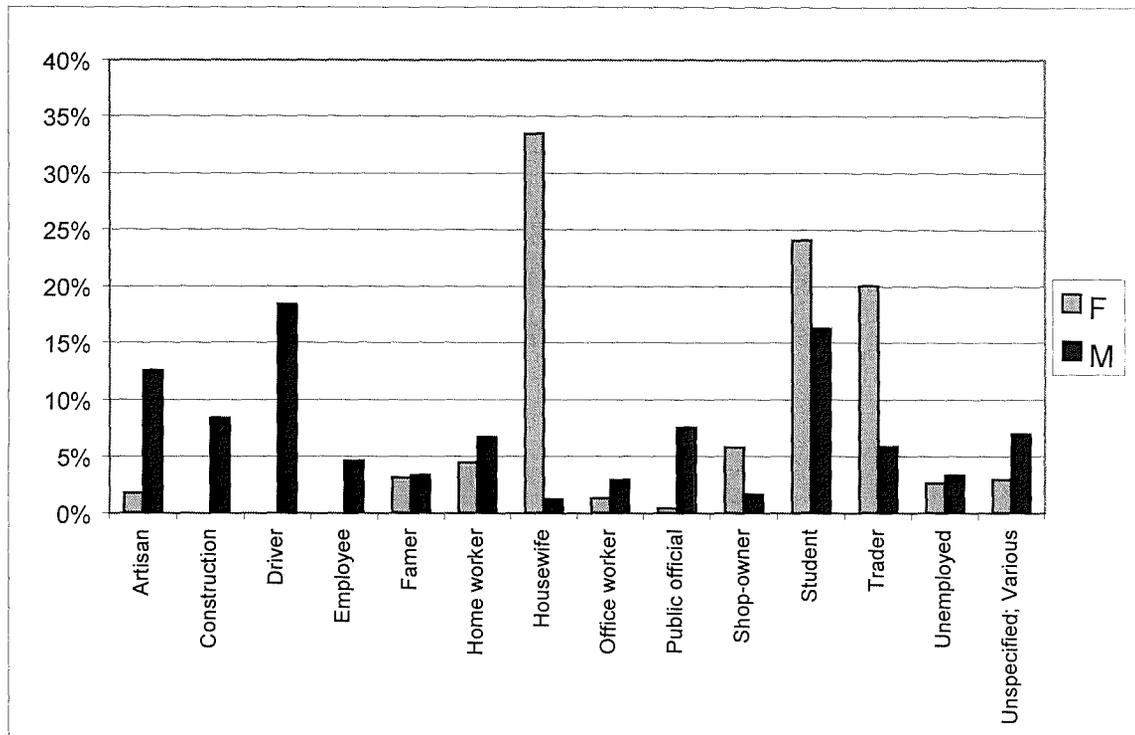


Diagram 1: Occupation of adults (over 16) in Rosas Pampa, divided by gender⁵

The ambition for many women was to work up from selling occasionally in the street markets as *ambulantes* (vendors with no fixed position or stall) either to having their own well-established stall in the Ceja and 16 de Julio markets, or opening a little shop ('tiendita') from their house. None of these are actually regulated for tax purposes, so they can be said to be in the informal economy. But the male activities are more regulated, partly because successive governments understand them to be more permanent and more important. The idea is that the man is ultimately responsible for bringing income to the household, and women's activities are seen as extra, even if they are usually more secure, particularly in the case of running a shop. As with other parts of the world, women's economic activity is often seen as an extension of their domestic duties, hence its frequent location in the household (Goddard 1996). In my survey of Rosas Pampa, 20% of women said that they were *comerciantes*, or traders, while 33% said they were housewives. However, many of the women I knew who called themselves housewives would also go out and sell goods occasionally, or would knit or weave

themselves cannot provide a *factura* at all. However, it is also possible to buy forged *facturas* to set against tax, for a commission of 1-2%.

⁵ Source: author's survey, conducted with the help of the local church youth group. See Appendix I.

commercially from their homes. And the presence of large numbers of women selling on the streets in El Alto contradicts the discourse of women working predominantly in the home. The high level of involvement of women in commerce cannot be entirely attributed to increased numbers of female-headed households, or to the economic crisis of the late 20th Century, the factors usually outlined in the feminist literature (Berger 1989). These have played a major part, but in addition, urban Aymaras are drawing on indigenous cultural codes about female-male complementarity in labour (Harris 2000 [1978]) and a long history of female responsibility for commerce in the Andes (de la Cadena 1996; Weismantel 2001).

Women's stories: two generations of economic strategising

Victoria and Carlos' story is told in the previous chapter. When her son was about 9 months old, and her mother lost her job in the *Alcaldía*, Victoria went to the Ceja and began selling underwear. She already had a small stock that had been given to her by her mother's sister, Doña Emiliana. She used to sell underwear after school and during vacations, before she got pregnant. She gained small loans from a micro-credit NGO, BancoMujer⁶, and from Carlos's mother, Doña Gregoria, to help her increase her stock. Rapidly, however, she realised that this was not particularly profitable, and it was hard work to be an *ambulante* with a small child. Meanwhile, her mother was given two ice cream machines by another relative, so they both began to sell ice creams, nearer to their home. During this period, Carlos and his brothers helped Victoria sell, when they weren't in school, or when her mother could not supervise one of the machines because she was attempting to get another political job. The ice-cream machines brought in between 6 and 30 Bs (US \$1 – US\$ 5) a day, depending on the weather, and with one location on a central square being considerably more profitable than the other. However, it was still hard work being out in the sun all day, for such small returns. Then Victoria and her mother found a small residence to rent which had a room for a shop, so they opened that, with capital from Doña Gregoria, from the second loan-cycle of BancoMujer, and products bought on credit. Victoria's mother continued to sell ice cream in the more profitable location, and to look for another political job. This was, Victoria felt, a much better arrangement, since she could stay at home. Carlos and his brother often helped her supervise the shop, particularly when she had to go out, for example to pay back her loans to the NGO. Her ambition was eventually to own a building with several shops.

⁶ This is a pseudonym.

Erica was 20, and with a small daughter about the same age as Victoria's son. Her husband, Marco, was working in Brazil as a *costurero*⁷ when I first knew her, at the beginning of 2000. She had remained in the countryside to work as a peasant, because of the amount of paperwork that she would have required in order to join Marco in Brazil. Under-21s require parental permission to travel, so both she and her daughter would have needed official documents proving that they had such permission, which would have been expensive. In early 2000, she came to Rosas Pampa, to live rent free with her aunt, Doña Gregoria – Carlos's mother, and also my landlady and *comadre*. Doña Gregoria gave her some coats, which she attempted to sell in local markets as an *ambulante*. She did some road-building work for the *Alcaldía*, but was not paid for it for months. She also did some spinning at home for me, which Marco helped her with when he came back from Brazil. He had come back because he missed his family, and also to try and make it in El Alto. He looked for work as a mechanic, but was unsuccessful. One time, through Doña Emiliana (Victoria's aunt, and my neighbour), I learned that Doña Betty, another friend of mine and Doña Emiliana's *comadre*, was looking for someone to make adobe bricks for her, so I suggested Marco. Marco, with occasional help from my partner and Erica's cousins, made the bricks over a few days in August. Doña Betty paid him by giving him two table football tables, which he set up in various places for the local kids to play on. Eventually, I learned, he ended up going back to Brazil, with Erica and their daughter, and one of Doña Gregoria's sons, in early 2001. They had obviously decided that it was too difficult to make a life for themselves in El Alto for the moment.

I highlight the intricacies and complexities of these two stories to make two main points. First, setting up in economic activity is extremely difficult nowadays, and requires flexibility and the ability to adapt to many different means of earning a living. Second, kinship networks play a vital role in the various economic strategies available to young people, not only in terms of provision of credit, but also in terms of labour assistance and finding work. Even I became part of those networks, at least for Erica and Marco. These networks are part of what is fashionably called the 'social capital' of the poor.⁸ In

⁷ Some one who sews clothes, but not at the skilled level implied by the word 'tailor'. It is closer to seamstress.

⁸ The concept of 'social capital' is influenced by Bourdieu's work (1976; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) (1986), but has been developed, and considerably changed, most prominently by Robert Putnam, Gary Becker, James Coleman and Francis Fukuyama. Several development agencies have taken up their ideas

the absence of state assistance, it is this 'social capital' that ensures that people do not become utterly destitute.

It takes a while before couples end up with some sort of economic stability, which does not mean that they have only one occupation each. Doña Emiliana and Doña Betty are both examples of successful *comerciantes*. Doña Emiliana has a market stall in the Ceja, and a spot in the 16 de Julio market (on Thursdays and Sundays). She and her husband, Don Antonio, sell underwear and school sports equipment. She told me that their stall in the Ceja brings in between 10 and 80 Bs (about US\$1.50 – US\$13) a day before expenses. They also go to sell at annual markets, such as the Feria de Ramos (Palm Sunday) in Rio Seco. They migrated to the city in the 1970s, as a young married couple. Don Antonio used to work in construction, but there is less work nowadays than there used to be, so he does occasional construction work for relatives, and supervises the fields that he and Doña Emiliana still own in their *pueblo*. When they bring back supplies from their *pueblo*, they sometimes sell them, but mostly store them, to use for family consumption later. They have a bakers oven in their house, which Don Antonio runs, and which they hire out for *Todos Santos* each November. They have three sons. The youngest two are at school, but help out on the stalls sometimes when they don't have homework. The oldest is studying accountancy, and frequently helps his parents on the stalls. He also works in construction for relatives, and just before I left got a job as a *voceador*⁹ in a bus. Doña Betty was born in La Paz to migrant parents, and moved up to El Alto when she was newly married. She runs a general store out of her house, with the assistance of her children and other relatives, such as her niece, who usually trades soft drinks in the Ceja as an *ambulante*, but helps Doña Betty in the winter season when there's no market for her product. The shop is in a prime spot in Rosas Pampa. In the past, Doña Betty has run a small restaurant but it wasn't profitable enough. She went to two micro-credit NGOs for loans to improve her already quite extensive stock, of bread, flour, sugar, soft drinks, toys, sweets and basic staples (not including vegetables or meat). Her husband, Don Stefano, owns and drives a truck, and also helps in the shop.

with enthusiasm, particularly the World Bank. See Ben Fine's work (Fine 2001) for a critique of social capital theorizing.

⁹ *Voceadores* ride in buses or minibuses with the driver, shouting out the route, and collecting fares from passengers. They are usually young boys, often related to the driver.

Citizenship and the economy in 20th Century Bolivia

Doña Betty and Doña Emiliana both rely upon their family members for assistance in their commercial activities, but they are in a more fortunate position than Erica and Victoria because they own the capital of their houses and their commercial sites, which in Doña Betty's case is the same building. Doña Emiliana has a fixed position in the Ceja and 16 de Julio, which are of similar value commercially. The different stories of the two generations of women highlight some points about the development of Bolivian citizenship and the informal economy in the latter half of the 20th Century, the subject of this subsection.

Although Bolivia has never had anything that could be called a welfare state, like other Latin American countries there has been a shift in understandings of citizenship, from one based upon collective social rights recognised by the state towards a more individualised focus.¹⁰ Clientelism has been a central aspect of this. The popular revolution of 1952 established the State (or perhaps more properly, the MNR) as the most important patron in Bolivia, through legislation such as the nationalisation of the mines, and the Agrarian reform, not to mention the clientelism within the bureaucracy.¹¹ The right to employment was conceived of collectively, and conditions fought over by the corporate groups of the State and the Unions, organised in the COB (Dunkerley 1984; Gamarra and Malloy 1995; Gamarra 2002). During the 1970s, the dictator Hugo Banzer presided over a construction boom in the cities, funded by foreign debt, and it was at this time that many of the first-generation migrants resident in Rosas Pampa, such as Doña Emiliana and Don Antonio, first came to the city.

From the 1980s, the economic crisis precipitated by over-reliance on foreign debt led to structural adjustment programmes that greatly reduced the role of the state in the provision of economic security, particularly in El Alto. The neoliberal restructuring of Decree 21060 in 1985 led to thousands of miners losing their jobs. Many went to the Chapare region in the Department of Cochabamba, to grow coca for cocaine; others

¹⁰ See Roberts (1995) for discussion of this for Latin America.

¹¹ In the *altiplano* countryside, the military-peasant pact from the mid-1960s onwards channeled state patronage through clientelistic relationships; and in areas where the Agrarian Reform was successful, many peasants remained loyal to the 'patrons' that had provided them with land (the MNR) for a considerable length of time. In the mines, state provision of employment oscillated according to the influence of the US and the private mining companies (Dunkerley 1984). I discussed bureaucratic clientelism in Chapter 3.

went into commerce in El Alto. The dual imperatives of excess labour supply in the formal sector and increased amounts of drug money that needed laundering led to an explosion in commercial activity in the informal sector. Couples such as Doña Emiliana and Don Antonio were at the beginning of this change; and Doña Betty and Don Stefano similarly moved to Rosas Pampa from the city of La Paz just as it was starting to grow, so that they could gain a central location for their business. However, by 1999, they were all experiencing the consequent increased competition that made it so difficult for the two younger couples to find work. In 2000, this had become particularly acute as a result of the combination of the global economic slowdown and the success of the government's coca eradication programme. The drug money that had buoyed up the informal economy and cushioned people from the more extreme effects of the adjustment period of the 1980s was beginning to dry up; and frequently people commented to me that life was especially hard, and that there were more sellers than consumers: the most common comment I heard from friends when talking about business was "no hay venta" – there are no sales, and no-one is buying, but too many people are selling.

The informal market operates on a knife-edge. The unfettered operation of the laws of supply and demand, with no subsidies in place, as well as fierce competition, mean that profit margins are tiny. Prices fluctuate according to season, so, for example, just before school begins, the cost of uniforms and exercise books in the 16 de Julio market rises noticeably. Don Antonio and Doña Emiliana make most of their money selling school clothes around the time of the Independence Day celebrations of August 6th. Those who operate in this sector are highly vulnerable to economic downturn or recession. Global economic downturns affect Bolivians in the informal sector probably sooner than they affect others in more formal economies. A good example of this is the crisis in petrol prices in 1999-2000. Because of the tight profit margins and the multiplier effect, the crude oil price rises in late 1999 were quickly translated into rises in the price of bread, as well as numerous other increased hardships, such as increased public transport fares, increased costs in food and decreased profit margins. This led immediately to demonstrations on the streets of La Paz and El Alto, and was at least partially responsible for the peasant uprisings during 2000. The protests over petrol prices reached Europe only in the summer of 2000, as the economies were able to absorb the price rises for longer. The current crisis in Argentina will also affect El Alto's economy, as remittances

from labour in Argentina will dry up, and consequently families will have less money to spend.

But people need to earn money from somewhere, since there are no safety nets apart from family and peasant agriculture, which itself is suffering. One of the main reasons that people such as Doña Emiliana and Don Antonio migrated to the city was the difficulty of surviving from agriculture alone. In their *pueblo*, the decision to convert to individual family parcels of land rather than communal fields meant that they did not have enough to feed themselves and any children they might have in the future, so they came to Rosas Pampa. The resulting creations of “entrepreneurs of the self” (Rose 1999: 164-5)¹² are a feature of advanced liberalism, such that citizens are no longer ‘passive’ recipients of social rights from the state, but active entrepreneurs who need to take individual responsibility for their well-being. Unfortunately, for a large proportion of ‘active, responsible’ citizens, the operation of capitalism is undeniably cruel. It relies upon a willingness to exploit oneself and one’s family (Rivera Cusicanqui, Arnold et al. 1996), and the lack of state-provided safety nets is possible only because families and NGOs take up the slack. Social provision is privatised, and the companies that are successful in the new, lean, capitalist economy enjoy their success on the back of the ‘social capital’ of the poor in the South.¹³

Micro-credit NGOs in Rosas Pampa and El Alto: navigating market-based and kinship-based economic rationalities

I shall now turn to look in detail at the operations of micro-credit NGOs in Rosas Pampa as specific examples of citizenship projects focussed on the economic realm and targeted at *cholas*. Again, their general thrust, at least on the surface, is individualising, however a closer look shows the complexities associated with such a project. Liberal (and neo-liberal) responses to the problems of poverty described in the previous section have

¹² [T]he model of the active citizen [since the 1980s] was one who was an entrepreneur of him- or herself. This was not simply a re-activation of values of self-reliance, autonomy and independence as the underpinning of self-respect, self-esteem, self-worth and self-advancement. It is rather that the individual was to conduct his or her life, as that of his or her family, as a kind of enterprise, seeking to enhance and capitalize on existence itself through calculated acts and investments. ... the citizen is to become a consumer, and his or her activity is to be understood in terms of the activation of the rights of the consumer in the marketplace. (Rose 1999: 164-5)

¹³ As well as tax revenue from the middle classes and poor in the North.

been two-fold: deregulation of the informal sector and the provision of micro-credit.¹⁴ Paradoxically, in practice these two proposals work to encourage the 'formalisation' of the informal economy, responding to a governmental (in the Foucauldian sense) desire to map and quantify the activities of citizens (Scott 1998). From the 1980s onwards, micro-credit has been an increasingly important form of development intervention worldwide, particularly with regard to women, following the example of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. Advocates have argued that micro-credit is a very effective form of poverty alleviation, and most effective if targeted at women. Some claim that it can also lead to women's empowerment (Berger and Buvinic 1989).¹⁵ The love affair between development agencies and micro-credit organisations culminated in 1995, when the World Bank established the Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest (CGAP), whose \$200 million is entirely dedicated to micro-enterprise credit (Rogaly 1996). Since that time, micro-credit institutions have boomed in Bolivia, following the earlier and very successful model of BancoSol, which became a self-sustaining financial institution in the early 1990s.

Training women in 'credit culture'

The first NGO to come to Rosas Pampa was BancoMujer. An educator came to the zone, hired a room in a house by the football field, and gradually some of the women of the zone heard about the loans on offer and came along to the meetings. This was the second BancoMujer group to be set up in Rosas Pampa. I heard about it through Victoria, who heard about it through her MIR women's group. I came to the classes about a week in, by which time the women had formed their solidarity groups, the basic unit for receipt of credit. Victoria was in a group with a school friend, whose mother had had loans from BancoMujer, the school friend's sister-in-law, Doña Betty (who is Victoria's aunt's *comadre*), Doña Betty's sister and Doña Lisa, who rented a room from Doña Betty. Later, another *comadre* of Doña Betty also joined the group.

In total, there were two weeks of training which the women had to attend in order to get loans from BancoMujer. During the first week, the women learned basic business

¹⁴ The Peruvian Hernando de Soto is the principal and most influential Latin American prophet of these two positions, particularly the former, in his two books, *The Other Path* (1989) and *The Mystery of Capital* (2000).

¹⁵ There are of course significant debates about the effectiveness of micro-credit in the alleviation of poverty and the empowerment of women. See Rogaly (1996) and Kabeer (2001)

administration. Victoria lent me her exercise book; it covers topics such as calculation of capital, earnings and profit, as well as organisation, asking questions such as the following:

“How much time will I dedicate to my business?

Who will look after my children and attend to household chores while I attend to my business?

Where will I buy my merchandise or materials?

Who will be my clients?”

The women had to fill out the answers to these questions, and consider how to make their business more profitable: Victoria has written, in answer to this, “Deliver punctually, Sell more. increase capital” (“Entregar puntual, Vender mas. aumentar el capital”). She was selling underwear as an *ambulante* in the Ceja, so punctual delivery was not particularly an issue for her, and would have no bearing on whether she would sell more, which was mainly influenced by the season and the price at which she was able to sell. They also dealt with increasing their competitiveness, quality of products, and what to do when ‘no hay venta’. The stress is on maintaining a stable level of profit, so that the loan can be paid back. The first question on the page called ‘Organizing my Business’ (‘Organizando Mi Negocio’) asks “Who will improve the business?” and Victoria has written “Each one of us with the loan” (“Cada una de nosotras con el préstamo”).

The training in these sessions followed a transmissive, ‘banking’ model. The BancoMujer trainers would ask a question, invite answers, then either repeat the correct answers or tell their audience the correct ones. The women quickly figured out that a vague stab at answering would result in them being given the ‘correct’ answer by the trainer, which they could then write down if they wanted to. The emphasis on writing and calculating on paper was odd: for example, there are five sheets in the exercise book mentioned above where the women could use tables to calculate fixed capital, costs, income/profit, and to write down a business plan. Victoria’s exercise book cannot have been the only one where these pages remained blank. Although all of the women I knew there were extremely proficient at mental arithmetic, there were some who had difficulty writing and reading.¹⁶ It is doubtful that this training was of much use to them. Many, certainly all of the older ones, were highly experienced businesswomen, often having run several

¹⁶ BancoMujer recognised this and ensured that a *mujer de vestido* took the position of secretary of the *Asociación Comunal* (with responsibility for minutes) during each of the two loan cycles I was present.

different businesses in their lives, and often two or more at the same time. But they may have found it useful to codify their knowledge.

The second week covered the running of an *Asociacion Comunal* (AC, Communal Association), and how their credit scheme ran, what the interest rates were, and so on. The women also nominated and voted in office holders for their AC, and the trainer told them what their responsibilities were to be. She went through the rules with us, and the women decided at what level to fix fines for lateness and non-payment. As we all (there were about thirty of us) sat on the floor of the room, with children and babies running around, crying, peeing, shouting, the trainer explained to us the types of loans available, interest rates, and administration, interspersed occasionally with exhortations not to hit whichever child was crying at the time. Although the women did not look as if they had understood all the intricacies of what they were being told (I found it complicated and I was furiously taking notes), the trainer did get across her two main points, which were that the credit was for the women's business, and that punctuality for the payment meetings was vital.

After the training sessions, the solidarity groups met to visit each other's business and home, to check that each member of the group was not lying, that she actually had a business, and some sort of collateral for the loan. In theory, they were supposed to check merchandise and calculate probable earnings. I went to two visits, where we sat in the back of Doña Betty's shop, and in Doña Maria's living room, drinking soft drinks and chatting. They both showed us their capital, in Doña Betty's case we all knew already, because she has a shop; Doña Maria showed us her jewellery that she makes and sells in the wealthy neighbourhood of Calacoto in the Zona Sur of La Paz.

Then everybody had a meeting at the BancoMujer office at the Ceja. The women sat in the room allocated to them, undergoing a couple more training sessions, where the trainer came in to exhort them to be responsible with their payment, and the nurse came to chat to them about healthcare facilities on offer at the office. They then had to wait while the Credit Committee, made up of the leaders of each solidarity group, met with the BancoMujer Director to discuss confidentially the amount each woman would get as a loan. There was on occasion a certain amount of bargaining, with the group leaders generally unwilling to allow the Director to lower the amount of loan available. For them,

the criteria for credit-worthiness were whether someone was *conocida*. The Director had more business-oriented criteria. Where someone was not a home-owner, she was unwilling to lend large amounts. I heard that by the beginning of the second cycle of loans the group leaders had become much stricter. Once the amounts were agreed, the disbursement date was set, when the women were given their money, which we *ch'allad* and celebrated with an *apthapi*, a communal meal to which everyone brought some food.



Plate 12. The *apthapi* at BancoMujer

The second credit group to arrive while I was living in Rosas Pampa, called Avanzar¹⁷, did not do as much training prior to giving out the loans, but spent time on it throughout the first loan cycle. Both organisations function on the model of the Grameen bank: the NGO lends to the whole group, the *Asociacion Comunal* in BancoMujer's terminology, or *Banco Comunal* (Communal Bank) in Avanzar's case. This larger group is split into small solidarity groups of 4-8 women who know each other very well.¹⁸ If one member of a solidarity group does not pay, then her fellow group members are in the first place responsible, but the leadership committee will help the group chase up an errant member, and the whole association may help with payment; if one group does not pay,

¹⁷ This is also a pseudonym.

¹⁸ See Otero (1989) for a discussion of the theory behind this mode of lending.

the larger group must cover their payment. Both organisations demanded weekly repayment meetings during the first loan cycle, which became fortnightly thereafter.¹⁹

Repayment rates for schemes such as this are legendarily high, given the supposed high-risk nature of loans to those without a great deal of collateral. This could be because the women are naturally responsible, entrepreneurial or grateful, or because the solidarity groups function so well, or the exhortations of the NGO trainers are so effective, but there is no doubt that the obligatory weekly meetings are certainly very important. BancoMujer meetings were held in their office in the Ceja, a short mini-bus journey away from Rosas Pampa. The Avanzar group met in Doña Betty's courtyard or a room adjacent to her house, with the facilitator arriving on his moped. Both emphasised the women's punctuality without applying the same rigour to their own, but there was a difference in the relationship of the women with their facilitator. It may be a matter of individual skill, or of gender, but the Avanzar facilitator was very clearly subordinate to the women. They called him 'young man' and joshed him when he requested their attention during training sessions, demanding that they be allowed to play games, or that there should be more consideration for their tardiness. Meanwhile, in BancoMujer, the facilitators were on their own territory. The women called them 'Señorita', and we were never sure who would be training us at any session. We would sit around, chat, the committee would call up group leaders to make payments, we would chat some more, while the committee counted the money, and occasionally someone would come and run a training session.

The BancoMujer Director said that she thought that women who progress through the loan cycles to the point where they have loans of US \$1 000 are extremely good future clients of ordinary banks; as she said, it is impressive that they pay US \$150 a fortnight without fail and punctually. She thought it important to create a "credit culture" ("cultura

¹⁹ Both gave out small loans, so that they can be sure the women can cover the repayments. As the women complete loan cycles without defaulting, they are able to gain larger loans, the theory being that each loan raises capital that in turn raises income, enabling the women to make larger repayments. Avanzar's maximum amount is 4 000 Bs (c. £400), while BancoMujer loans up to US \$1 500. However, Avanzar has a slightly different way of administering loans to BancoMujer. The organisation provides the initial loan, around 500Bs per woman, but the repayments, including interest, are paid to the group's treasurer, rather than being paid into a bank, as in the case of BancoMujer. In order to 'make the money work', members of the Avanzar *Banco Comunal* are able to borrow from this stock of money at a rate of 5% monthly interest. BancoMujer also allows this, but from the group's savings only. Both oblige their members to save a stipulated amount each week as well as repay the loans.

crediticia”), i.e. one where recipients of credit know that they have to pay it back on time and responsibly:

“At the national level, there isn’t much of a credit culture, people aren’t responsible. Here, I think that the majority of people think that you’re clever if you swindle the bank; and you’re a fool if you’re honest.”

(“Al nivel nacional, no hay mucha cultura crediticia, no son responsables. Aquí, creo que es la idea primero, no, de la mayoría de la gente, eres vivo si le engañas al banco; y eres un tonto si eres honesta.”)

BancoMujer clearly has a role to play in the creation of a reliable credit culture, and their main method is getting women to self-regulate. BancoMujer’s position, though, is somewhat disingenuous. They are not really training women for access to formal credit, since formal financial institutions do not have such demanding repayment terms, or what the BancoMujer Director called their “credit technology”. It is also a rather patronising position, since there is already a perfectly vibrant credit culture in Rosas Pampa. As Hernando de Soto (2000) rightly points out, one of the most important ways in which the poor bank the assets they have is through making loans to friends, neighbours, and family, often at high rates of interest. It is also common to sell building materials, food, and other provisions on credit. I knew of people who lent out money on the basis of the collateral of title deeds to houses or cars. At interest rates of around 5% per month this was the best way to invest any large sums of money they received, such as redundancy payments. When a friend of mine needed US \$300 for scans during her pregnancy, she asked me to introduce her to someone else I knew who, she’d heard, had that kind of money to lend short-term. Most people I knew well borrowed from family members, to set up a small shop, or cover living expenses. I regularly lent small sums of money to my *comadre* when she was waiting on her husband’s wage, which often did not get paid for three months at a time. And I went with her once to a neighbour’s house to buy a quintal of rice on credit with deposit money that I had loaned her. Building materials shops also sell cement and other materials on credit; and if I did not have enough cash for provisions, the corner shops would accept late payment, a perk of the ‘*casera*’ relationship, which I discuss shortly. The issue is not whether there exists a credit culture but whether it is regulated by government or large private financial institutions, whether that credit culture is inside, or on the edges, of the formal economy.

People managed extremely delicate webs of credit, and I was only allowed a glimpse into a small part of them, since they were very private. BancoMujer and Avanzar were just another available resource, with lower interest rates than neighbours might charge, but

much more onerous repayment arrangements, and less flexibility than family. Often, women would borrow from family members to make the loan repayments to the NGO. I had one friend who borrowed a lot of money from family members, all of whom quickly became aware that she could not afford to repay them, and that she was borrowing from many others, who ended up supporting her. Given all these resources to tap into, the relatively low levels of micro-credit loans (up to US\$ 100 in the first BancoMujer cycle, and 500 Bs in Avanzar) meant that some women decided that it was not worth the trouble for them. Others that I knew thought that it might be a convenient source for money to enable them to spread payment for their children's dental work, or military service. And others did actually spend it on their businesses, as they were supposed to. Women's responses therefore varied, from 'misuse' of the money to using it 'correctly', although members of each solidarity group usually had no idea of what exactly individual women spent the money on, despite BancoMujer's request that the women monitor how they all spent their loan money. It was not discussed among the women.

The use of networks and self-regulation to enforce repayment

In this section, I show that, despite the NGOs' rhetorical insistence on individual entrepreneurship and accumulation of capital, they are in fact constructed and understood using cultural codes that are very familiar to the women involved. Related to this, they rely upon the women's existing networks of family and friends, and associated cultural understandings and obligations in order to ensure loan repayment. As with the women themselves, the micro-credit NGOs navigate very effectively between 'disembedded' and 'embedded' economic rationalities.²⁰ In both groups the women themselves controlled the money, even if the BancoMujer workers took a more active, as opposed to advisory, role. This is probably the main reason for the high repayment rates of such schemes. The plan below shows the relationships between members of the BancoMujer group. I drew it early on in my acquaintance with the women, so it is definitely an underestimate of the density of their connections. However, it gives an

²⁰ This distinction draws on the formalist-substantivist debate within Economic Anthropology in the mid-20th Century, where the formalists, such as Firth and Pospisil, argued that in non-market economies it was possible to identify 'economic' behaviour based on the rational maximization of resources and the assumption of scarcity (that wants always exceed means). The substantivists, led by Polanyi and Dalton, argued that such rationalities only applied in market-based societies, where the economy appears disembedded from other social relations, and the market is the means of allocating resources by reference to impersonal and not social criteria (Herskovits 1960 [1940]; Firth 1967; Dalton 1971). Newer economic anthropology tends to work as I do from the premise that the market is never quite as 'disembedded' as was once thought (and as is often still assumed by economists, e.g. see Begg (2000)). See for example, Thomas (1991), Miller (1994) and Narotzky (1997).

indication of how the women knew each other through, for example, *compadrazgo*, marriage, economic relationships (such as that between landlady and tenant), occupational friendships, and being neighbours, and *vecinas*.

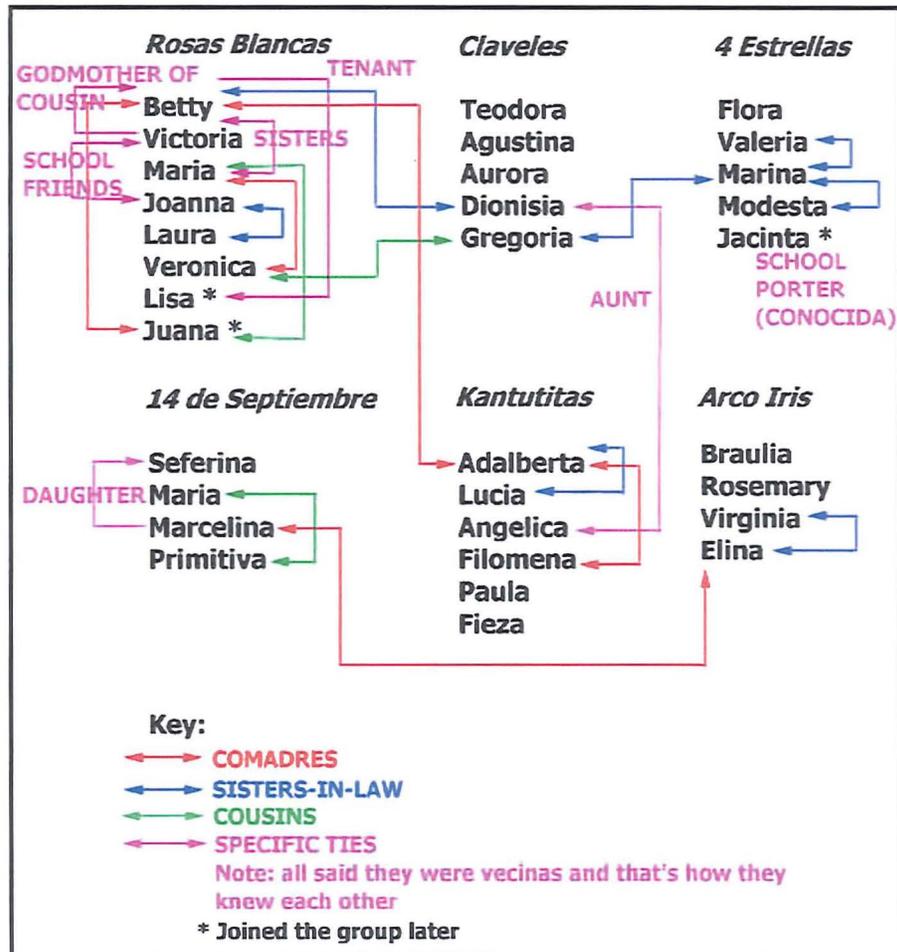


Diagram 2: Plan of relationships between women in the BancoMujer AC

Being *conocida* was extremely important for the women, as it was for many of the characters in this thesis. When the school porter wanted to come and join the group halfway through the first loan cycle, the BancoMujer worker asked the ladies if it was all right. Since she was “*bien conocida*”, there was no problem for them. She was very proud of the fact that everyone knew her, and that she got on well with all the parents of school pupils. In the meeting of the Credit Committee that I attended, the women were far more ready to defend requests for large loans from women who were *conocidas*. Even if they did not know someone personally, if someone they did know could place her in a kinship network then that was *conocida* enough for them. If someone is *conocida*, it means that they can be placed, through their connection to others via various types of important

relationships. *Compadrazgo* is central to this, as a means of guarantee and formalising a friendship. Don Antonio and Doña Emiliana were *compadres* not only with their kin but also with the two women who had shops at either end of my street. One of these was Doña Betty, and the fact that she was godmother to Victoria's cousin (Doña Emiliana's son) was a strong enough relationship for them to be in a solidarity group together. Doña Betty had a huge network of friends, relatives and *comadres*, many of whom were in BancoMujer, as the plan above shows. She brought together others for the Avanzar group. Through her shop, she was certainly one of the most *conocida* women in my part of the zone.

Chapter 3 discusses *compadrazgo* in relation to politics, and Chapter 6 with regard to the regulation of the heterosexual couple, and here we see its importance in economic relationships, principally those between women. An important, and linked, relationship is that between *caseras*. For buyers, a *casera* is the person from whom you always buy certain things, in the market or in shops: your *casera* will often give you a special discount, in order to keep your business. My *comadre* had *caseras* for all of her staple purchases in the principal markets where she shopped, excepting the 16 de Julio, where she went only for special purchases. For the vendor, the *casera* is the person who always buys from you. Often, *caseras* will become *comadres*, especially with regard to general stores in a zone. This is why Doña Betty has so many *comadres*, because she owns a shop. In La Paz and El Alto, similar products are usually sold in similar locations (in markets, there will be a particular street or streets dedicated to vegetables, one dedicated to fish, etc.) and there are a very large number of local stores within walking distance. In Rosas Pampa I counted about 80 shops for the 1000 households, and there was also a market held every morning.²¹ In such an environment, where location does not give competitive advantage, the ability of the vendor to hold onto her customers is crucial. She has to sell good quality goods at a good price, and make her *casera* feel special; in return, her *casera* will be loyal to her. Silvia Rivera argues that women bridge kinship and the market through this *casera* relationship, and that this is one of the ways urban women in particular combat the fragmentation of social networks characteristic of turn of the century El Alto and La Paz.²² I would place less stress on the fragmentation of social networks in the city than Rivera does (e.g. see Rivera Cusicanqui, Arnold et al. 1996), but I would agree that

²¹ Silvia Escobar (1989) states that in 1983 there was a shop for every 17 households in La Paz.

²² Personal communication.

women create new networks when they come to the city, and that the *casera* relationship is central to that.

Micro-credit organisations build upon this, using the cultural and embedded nature of economic relationships to enhance their success in market-oriented terms of profit, repayment of loans and accumulation of capital. NGOs also sometimes structure their lending around Andean cultural forms, such as using the *apthapi* to commemorate the first group meeting in BancoMujer, and a *ch'alla* of the money disbursed. The latter was explained to us as important to encourage the money to work and to grow, something stressed very frequently by the Avanzar facilitator; and expressive of the links between money and fertility highlighted by Olivia Harris (1989). Micro-credit organisations all over the world have tapped into these kinds of resources and understandings, creating structures whereby women's social networks can even eventually make a profit for those lending to the women. Their talk of lending on the basis of "trust" is somewhat misleading, as they rely on their clients to do the trusting, and to enforce their trust through social disapproval. Informal lenders sometimes work on the same basis – I once saw large letters painted on someone's house saying "Marco C____, pay back your debt."

The confluence of market-based and kinship-based economic rationalities within the micro-credit NGO can be contradictory, sometimes causing tension in both 'spheres'. For example, the BancoMujer Credit Committee denied one woman (Angela) the amount of loan that she wanted and needed in the second loan cycle. Although they are supposed to be confidential meetings, Angela and her family heard on the grapevine that one woman in particular (Maria) had been vociferous in rejecting her request. I assumed that Maria was concerned about the ability of Angela to pay, but Angela's family were less than pleased, and thought that Maria was getting proud, and rather above herself. They were concerned that she had some kind of problem with them, an impression that was reinforced by the fact that Maria had stopped greeting Angela's mother politely when they passed in the street. The contradictions come out also in the opposite direction, where social disapproval fails to encourage repayment, for example when someone simply does not have the means to pay back their loan. The BancoMujer group experienced this with one lady, who failed to come to two meetings during the second cycle. Her solidarity group covered her repayments, but eventually the leaders of the group went round to her house, to collect at least something. On their return they

reported, sympathetically, that she had nothing to cover her loan, “not even a bedstead”. They seem to have let her off the payments, since they had no choice, but there may have been some arrangement made of which I was unaware.

Defaults often also happen because the women get tired of the rather egregious terms of repayment, or “credit technology”. The women had to attend a meeting every week or fortnight, in both cases at lunchtime when they have family responsibilities, and in BancoMujer’s case they had to pay for transport to the office. If they are one minute late, they must pay a fine of 5Bs (50p or five journeys between Rosas Pampa and the Ceja); and they can only miss two payment meetings in a cycle if they notify the group that they are going to travel, or they have another good excuse, such as illness. I found it hard arranging my time so that I could go to the meetings each week, and a number of the women had other clashing commitments, quite apart from the responsibility to feed their husbands, and to get their children ready for afternoon school. Two of my friends were in both credit groups, and sometimes the meetings clashed when one or other was rescheduled; one of the members of Victoria’s solidarity group had to go on a demonstration with her union at the time of two payment meetings. Since both organisations would have fined her for non-attendance, she had to weigh up which fine to pay.

The BancoMujer Director told me that the women become more active in controlling the credit as the loan cycles progress. They become more wary of allowing new women into the group, even if they are *conocidas*, and police non-payment more strictly. So, in addition to the NGO workers hectoring any non-payers, the women eventually self-regulate as a group in order to achieve the NGO’s goals of reliable repayment of credit, and the structures gradually function more efficiently, as the less reliable women are weeded out over the loan cycles. Micro-credit is a complex issue, and not as uncomplicatedly good and efficient as it is sometimes made out to be by the “micro-credit evangelicals” (Rogaly 1996). Development scholars debate whether it fulfils its promise of empowerment and poverty alleviation (Kabeer 2001), but often fail to address the question of whether it is appropriate to exploit women’s resources in order to fulfil the NGOs’ own development targets, such as sustainability (or profit) and the ability to attract further funds from development agencies, which I discuss in the following section. The demand that exists may in fact be for money rather than for credit

specifically, but whichever it is, that demand is rather exploited, and there are many women who do not consider it worthwhile for them. The NGOs are not only exploiting women's social networks and pressures to conform, but they also exploit the women's time, patience, and, ultimately, their inability to get credit from other private financial institutions.

'La parte social' – human development education

As the above section shows, the micro-credit NGOs considered it their role to educate the women in 'credit culture', but their educational goals also went further. As if the repayment terms were not onerous enough, a further requirement is added to the weekly or fortnightly sessions, in the form of 'capacity-building' for the women. The NGOs are a complicated hybrid of business logic combined with education in what I call a 'human development model'. I use this to refer to training sessions, called *capacitaciones*, on family planning, nutrition, infant health, women's sexual health, women's health, women's rights, self-esteem and other issues. In this section, I argue that these *capacitaciones* are a necessarily complement to the economic citizenship project described above, since they are an attempt to get the women to work on their bodies in order to construct themselves as gendered citizens defined in specific ways. The whole package combines to form a fairly conservative take on women's empowerment. Many Latin American feminists have recognised the empowerment of women as a crucial step to enable them to exercise full citizenship (Molyneux and Lazar forthcoming), but of course from the earliest days of the fashion for women's empowerment as a development goal, it has meant many different things to different people (Kabeer 1999). The versions of empowerment revealed through BancoMujer and Avanzar's educational programme aim to create particular kinds of women.

The administrators of both funds highlighted the educational function of their credit schemes to me in interviews. Avanzar maintain that they provide "credit with education"; BancoMujer began as an organisation that provided business training for women, moving thereafter into credit provision, and then incorporating the "parte social" ("social part"), namely training in healthcare as well as healthcare service provision. Avanzar do sessions on vaccinating children in the first loan cycle, and in later cycles they work on themes such as family planning, women's health and self-esteem, which they were just

developing in 2000. BancoMujer focus very much on women's health. They brought the "parte social" into their credit programmes, according to the Director, to make their institution more attractive to clients (i.e. women) in a competitive market. In the long run, she plans to jettison the training and provision of healthcare services, and become a bank, because the funding for their social programmes won't last forever. She's probably being very astute: two of her principal donors are USAID and the IDB, both of whom favour promoting sustainability in NGOs. This sounds good but tends to mean that users of NGOs should pay for their services, and social programmes in this context will inevitably suffer. A cynic would say that for now, social programmes are mainly there to enable donors to justify the subsidy they give to micro-credit NGOs. The mantra that micro-credit is good business, although often repeated, is widely known to be a fiction; as Ben Rogaly (1996) points out, if it were so profitable then the big banks and commercial financial institutions would have moved in a long time ago. When BancoSol moved from being a micro-credit NGO to become a self-sustaining financial institution, its interest rates doubled in order to cover administrative costs (Rivera Cusicanqui, Arnold et al. 1996).

Reproduction, empowerment and women's citizenship

Social programmes also enable the NGOs to say that they are empowering women, and thus access development agency funds set aside for that purpose. One position sees female empowerment as residing essentially in access to markets (Ackerly, in Kabeer 2001), a position with which most feminist and/or women's organisations in Latin America would certainly disagree. Activists in the Latin American women's movement tend to see empowerment as a complex range of changes in women's self-perceptions and their abilities to be involved in decisions that affect them, at all sorts of levels. This is the essence of full citizenship for women, as demanded by the women's movement in Latin America since the run-up to the Beijing Conference of 1995.²³ Obstacles to empowerment range from structural issues such as inequitable wealth distribution to more intimate issues of self-esteem. Different women's NGOs have different ways of approaching these questions, but few ignore them (Molyneux and Lazar forthcoming). Hence the social programmes of BancoMujer and Avanzar.

²³ For discussions of this, see Hola (1997), Molyneux (ed.) (2002), Molyneux and Lazar (forthcoming).

However, international donor agencies also have other unstated goals that are fulfilled by many 'women's empowerment' and training sessions. In women's training there is often a strong emphasis on healthy, but not excessive, reproduction. In practice, family planning is highlighted by a number of agencies, especially USAID, ostensibly because use of family planning empowers women to control the size of their families and therefore their lives. It is positively correlated with other indicators generally held to denote development (such as income, maternal mortality, infant mortality, infant nutritional levels, and education). There is also a clear demand from many women for access to family planning, although the stress placed upon it by NGOs in training struck me as disproportionate. I cannot help thinking that the contemporary stress on family planning in part reflects earlier eugenicist population control ideas (Stepan 1991). The BancoMujer Director did say to me and to health representatives for each *Asociación Comunal*, that "we must get them [i.e. ordinary members of the AC] to stop reproducing".

The NGOs did not broach the topic of family planning until everyone was comfortable with the training session formats. In both groups, training sessions did not happen during every payment meeting, being reliant upon the presence of a specific trainer, and, in the case of Avanzar, on the willingness of the women to listen. The BancoMujer group were *capacitadas* – trained²⁴ – in "women's health" (breast and cervical cancer) twice, but did not realise that they had covered that topic before until well into the second session. My notes from the first session show that the trainer tried to ascertain the knowledge that the women had of womb cancer, and then inform them of details such as who is at risk, what might be the symptoms, whether you can live without your womb. Her method was, essentially, holding up and explaining pictures, asking closed questions to the whole group, and providing the answers when someone had at least attempted an answer. It was participatory, but in the sense that we were being asked for the correct response, rather than asked to draw on our own experience to solve a problem. She was trying to do a number of things during the 45 minute session: explain cancer, explain preventive measures (smear tests and breast examination), and, more profoundly, encourage the women to take an interest in their own health, to look after themselves and not feel shame. This was a recurrent theme in the training sessions, a slogan I often

²⁴ *Capacitar* is a verb used very frequently by Latin American NGOs, meaning capacity-building/training.

heard was “if we don’t look after our health, who else is going to?”²⁵

The content was based around a particular image of womanhood, that may or may not have been consonant with the women’s actual lived experience. That image was overwhelmingly one of monogamy (usually), responsibility for family, fearfulness, ignorance and abnegation. Examples of this abound, such as the way the trainer explained breast cancer susceptibility. She said that single women and nuns often get breast cancer because “they did not make these organs function. God created us with these, not to have curves, but to feed children”; womb cancer was implicitly presented as a punishment for many abortions/miscarriages, promiscuity, and having had lots of children; and the women were assumed to be scared and shameful about going for a smear test, which she recommended twice a year.²⁶ I do not mention this critically, as this particular trainer was one of the nicest and most respectful. She frequently raised laughs or giggles from the women and, apart from a few who dozed during the session, they seemed to listen, and take in the minimum, which was that they should have a smear test and that they should examine their breasts. Translating that into action is another matter, even though BancoMujer had a doctor in the office on certain days (although these were never really regularised or specified). And the fact that they did not speak up when she repeated herself on another occasion indicates either that they had not really remembered the first session or that they did not feel comfortable questioning her.

I saw much more patronising treatment from another trainer, the nurse in the office who shouted at the women for not attending, and seemed to think she was doing them a favour, as if they had chosen to be *capacitadas* by her. In her session, the women simply switched off. I do not remember what the topic was, other than the usual hectoring about attending their health centres. The Avanzar promoter was much more successful, because he incorporated games in his classes, and taught sessions only very occasionally, covering small amounts during each session. The relevance of his education in vaccination is somewhat doubtful, however. He focussed on statistics and details, such as the name of the TB bacteria, but was essentially exhorting the women to take their children to the doctor so that they could undergo the prescribed series of vaccinations.

²⁵ This responds to a quite generalized feminist consensus that women tend to disregard their health at the expense of that of their families.

²⁶ The recommended frequency for smear tests in England is once every three years. I suspect that few English women would go voluntarily more often than that.

Since children have to prove that they are vaccinated before they can attend city schools, such detailed training is not perhaps that necessary.

Capacitaciones are not tailored to the women's needs, essentially because they are conceived of as chats or programmes that are delivered to a large number of listeners. This tends to respond on the one hand to quantitative measurement of activity, and on the other hand to the dominant transmissive notion of education discussed in the following chapter. Furthermore, the NGOs appear to think that the women do not get this knowledge from anywhere else, and thus begin from a position of complete ignorance. In addition, or as a result, the women were not particularly interested in learning the often overly technical and irrelevant information. The majority of women paid only polite attention to the training, and forgot the details very quickly. The general message was that women should look after their health, which for both NGOs essentially meant that they should go to a doctor regularly, and some women, particularly the younger ones, were more receptive to this message than others. These projects are an example of government that operates in very intimate spheres. Through them, the women are encouraged to work on their selves within a particular image of womanhood that is linked to responsible reproduction. Empowerment and citizenship are thus, in practice, granted to them only on certain terms.

Education, empowerment and targets

The human development education found in NGOs such as BancoMujer or Avanzar responds to donor agencies' demands for quantitative measurement of NGO activity, 'audit culture' (Shore and Wright 1999) operating in the NGO sector. For example, BancoMujer runs a system where each *Asociación Comunal* (AC) appoints a Responsable Popular de Salud (Popular Health Representative, RPS). Her responsibility is to advise the women on health problems, accompany them to the doctor, and on occasion run training sessions. Doña Maria was the Rosas Pampa RPS. I went along with her to their training session, which ran over five days at the office. The aim of training the RPSs was that each one could then be a health promoter and give talks ('charlas') to her AC. However, they received no training in how to actually teach, so it is not surprising that factors such as age, force of personality, numbers of people, and even the acoustics in the room made the difference between whether people listened or not to their talks. In fact, the NGO was in fact more concerned about having trained the RPSs than about whether the women listened to them later. During the last day of the training session, the

RPSs were told that the external evaluators wanted BancoMujer to train more health promoters. Our centre was behind other BancoMujer ones, such as Alto Lima, where of the 60 ACs, all the RPSs are trained. In ours there were 58 ACs, but only 22 RPSs came for their training sessions. Since not all 22 RPSs in my session were actually effectively *capacitadas*, I assume that the same is true for the 60 in Alto Lima. Nonetheless, BancoMujer is able to say that they have trained these numbers of health promoters, because they attended the classes and passed the exams, which were brief, and certainly did not require 100% correct answers in order to pass. The women have their certificates, and everyone is happy. Empowerment and training are reduced to target figures for those attending courses, meetings, *capacitaciones* and talks. This is by no means exceptional: charities and NGOs all over the world have to respond to quantitative targets set by donors, or they lose their funding. This 'audit culture' is the form of government to which they are subject; the way in which politics regulates the provision of what used to be public services (Rose 1999; Shore and Wright 1999).

Although charities/NGOs are not profit-making outfits in the sense of providing dividends to shareholders, after they get to a certain size, other profit-making motives may come into play. Funding may become necessary for its own sake: rather than growth allowing the charity to provide a better service to more beneficiaries, more services to more beneficiaries become the means to justify growth. This 'corporatisation' of charities/NGOs is perhaps inevitable, if not intentional. It means that it is probably incorrect to even ask whether organisations such as BancoMujer and Avanzar are empowering women, since although that is their aim it is not the way in which they measure, or are forced to measure, their performance. Maia Green makes the point with regard to DFID, using the project-based logframe as an example: regardless of 'higher' development aims, each project has to be defined in terms of achievable objectives, which are then met, because they are essentially self-fulfilling (2001). Whether meeting those particular objectives leads to the 'higher aims' is functionally irrelevant, because this is simply how accountability works.

Of course, most of the people actually doing the work are fortunately not so cynical, and there are probably many positive side effects of their actions. The Avanzar administrator told me that now:

“many of the ladies make their own decisions, because before they consulted their husband for any little thing ... but now it's no longer like that. We've

changed this attitude, we're trying to change it, and with this new theme of self-esteem, I think that we will improve the women's condition a little more, let's say."

("muchas de las señoras toman sus decisiones, porque antes se consultaba con su esposo por cualquier cosa ... pero ya no es así. Nosotros hemos cambiado esa actitud, estamos tratando de cambiarla, y con este tema de autoestima más, creo que un poco más vamos a mejorar, digamos, la condición de la mujer.")

My suspicion is that whatever empowerment does occur probably happens as a result of the women getting together in the meetings, discussing their latest argument with their husbands, problems with pregnancies, mothers-in-law, children, etc., and in fact this is often recognised by NGOs themselves.

Micro-credit NGOs exploit women's sociability, through making them come to so many meetings in order to ensure re-payment of loans; and to be the subjects of *capacitaciones* that gain the NGO funding from donor agencies. However, it is important not to overstate the case against these NGOs. Although the meetings are sometimes inconvenient, on the whole, the women enjoyed getting together every so often, away from their home or market stall. Their kids played with each other, making friends too, and each mother looked out for everyone else's child. My abiding memories of the meetings are not the training sessions, but of seeing babies grow and develop, discussing what they can do, of women knitting, dozing, catching up with friends, gossiping, talking about illnesses, about pregnancies, problems, hangovers. The training and paying were in many ways background to the real business of the day for the majority of women there, including myself. Feminists have acknowledged the importance of collective organisation and solidarity to encourage a sense of empowerment among women: Townsend et al (1999) call it 'power with', as opposed to other forms of power, such as 'power to', 'power over' and 'power from within'. The development of 'power with' is unquantifiable, but important and clearly fulfilling for those women involved.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have discussed micro-credit NGOs in order to explore how the citizenship projects devised by international development agencies and favoured by government policy operate in practice. I wanted to show the mixing of their attempts at individualising and 'disembedding' women (*cholas*) as economic agents and the education of a specific version of womanhood. The women's patchy responses to such projects mean that they are only partially successful in meeting their explicit aims. However, they

are remarkably successful in other terms: specifically meeting educational quotas, gaining funds, and ensuring repayment of loans. The latter is down to their contradictory reliance upon the embedded economic rationalities that on the surface they seek to modify.

Not all women choose to participate in micro-credit organisations: Doña Emiliana and Doña Gregoria both thought about it but decided that it was not worth their while. Others who do participate use the loans for ‘incorrect’ purposes that do not aid the accumulation of capital, such as paying for dental work for their children. Most ignore or imperfectly understand the content of the training sessions. A very few use the loans for their intended purpose and listen carefully in the *capacitaciones*. The NGOs that provide micro-credit are a locus for interactions between transnational development discourses, state requirements to control the informal economy, local culturally-based approaches to economic activity and personal desires. The dual strategy of provision of credit and credit education alongside human development education is an example of an attempt to create individual gendered citizens who are ‘empowered’ to access formal markets on certain terms. They should also ideally monitor their own health and reproduction and learn to discipline their own bodies by subjecting them to the modern healthcare system.

Citizenship has always had an important economic dimension, from the focus on property rights in Liberal notions of citizenship to Marshall’s emphasis on social rights protected by the welfare state (‘civil citizenship’ and ‘social citizenship’). As I argued in chapter 1, the end of the 20th Century has seen a shift in understandings of citizenship, and nowhere more keenly than in the economic dimension. From economic citizenship based upon a bottom line of social rights collectively respected, the global trend now is a return to the focus on civil citizenship and more individual entrepreneurial responsibilities. Micro-credit is a form of development intervention perfectly in line with such philosophies, and in addition, a way for politics to intervene in what Foucault identified as the central issue for government, the ‘conduct of conduct’ (Rose 1999) and the disciplining of bodies. In the case of micro-credit, it is not the State that is trying to measure and thus fix a certain set of subjects/citizens, rather this has been privatised, and the NGOs and donor agencies do the work. However, their individualising citizenship projects are reliant upon economic rationalities embedded in kinship and social networks. So, as with the Evangelical project of self, the lines are blurred, and their success (in these terms) is partial.

CHAPTER 8

SCHOOLING CITIZENS

This chapter extends my approach to citizenship as a set of projects of the self by developing the educational theme of the previous chapter. Schooling has long been recognised as the key to forming national citizens¹, and there is no doubt that it is in institutional education that we find the purest model of citizenship project operating. I argued in the previous chapter that the citizenship projects implemented by micro-credit NGOs in Rosas Pampa were contradictory, and this chapter makes a similar case for the education system. Through an investigation of the local school in Rosas Pampa, I aim to demonstrate that the citizenship projects promoted there are not homogeneous or even particularly coherent. In fact, Bolivian schools are arenas where differing notions of citizenship are promoted and contested through the bodies of the pupils. They are an especially good example of the interplay of tensions between the different versions of citizenship that are promoted in Bolivia today, which I described in Chapter 1. Particularly since 1994, when the Bolivian government introduced the first large-scale educational reform since 1955, schools have become sites for the struggle between active/passive and individual/collective theories of subjectivity, agency and citizenship. Fashionable educational and political theories that stress critical thinking, choice, entrepreneurship and individual agency come into conflict with historically grounded forms of collective political agency and dominant values of conformity, obedience, and respect for authority, all of which have strong links to *altiplano* rural values as well as to the values of being a *vecino* of Rosas Pampa. Furthermore, investigating the school highlights the importance of the links between ethnicity, modernity and citizenship: day to day practice conflicts with another set of fashionable political and educational discourses, those of *interculturalidad* ('interculturality') and the '*pluri-multi*'² – the stress on the multiethnic and pluricultural nature of the Bolivian nation. In a public system that implicitly confers full citizenship only on those who have become 'modern' through schooling, the modernising projects of the schools in rural and marginal urban areas are predicated upon a symbolic exchange of 'ethnic' identity for Bolivian citizenship.

¹ For example, see Dale (1981), Gellner (1983), Hobsbawm (1990) and Green (1997)

² Discussed in Chapter 1. Glossed as 'lo pluri-multi' because of the frequent repetition of the formula found in article I of the 1994 Bolivian Constitution, which declares that Bolivia is "free, independent, sovereign, *multiethnic and pluricultural*" (emphasis added).

In Rosas Pampa the main school, called the Unidad Educativa Bolivia (U.E.B.), is a central institution both to the ways in which the national state operates locally and to the internal dynamics of the zone itself. One of the arguments of this thesis is that citizenship in Rosas Pampa is expressed and practised in concrete and physical ways, and this is especially the case for formal education. So, as Chapters 2 and 3 showed, the school is one of the focal points for the investment in infrastructure that defines municipal and zonal politics. Thus, the political parties brought items for the school during the local election campaign of December 1999, in order to donate something to the whole zone, and stress their commitment to public goods such as education, with an eye also to the mobilising power of the *Junta Escolar*. Local community leaders also nominated the section of road outside the school for paving by the municipal government.³ The majority of families in the zone send their children to the state-funded primary and secondary schools, which operate out of the same building. The only local competition is a Lutheran private school, which charges fees, limits class sizes and only covers children from the ages of 5-14. After the age of 14, there is only the state-funded secondary school, the U.E.B. The school building is in a central location, on the main road that runs through the zone, and on the edge of the football pitch. These factors make it politically key for the zone.

Learning citizenship: the example of Children's Rights Week

I was fortunate to be teaching in the U.E.B. when they celebrated the third annual Children and Young People's Rights Week, an obvious starting point for a discussion of citizenship education. The Children's Rights Week was scheduled for the week of 27th September to 1st October 1999, and was year commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The theme of the week was "The Bolivia we want in the 2000s", and UNICEF and the First Lady's office funded a pamphlet with suggested activities for teachers to implement in schools over the whole country (Comisión Nacional de Organización de la 'II Semana de los Derechos de la Niñez y la Adolescencia' 1998). The suggestions included, for the first day, inauguration ceremonies, called *horas cívicas*⁴; followed by debates in each form room on 'What has Bolivia done for Our Rights?'; on the second day, the preparation of creative pieces of group work, such as plays, posters, and poems on the theme of rights. On the third day, the pamphlet calls

³ British politics is similarly physical: recall the claims that each party will invest in schools and hospitals rather than teachers and doctors.

⁴ Lit. civic hours. Discussed below.

for pupils to design action plans for the exercise of their rights within the family, the community, the municipality, the state and civil society; on the fourth day, for them to develop mechanisms for pupil representation in their school's decision-making structures, and to organise delegations to visit TV and newspaper offices and publicise the situation of their rights in Bolivia. On the fifth and final day, the pamphlet declares that pupils should hold educational fairs in their zones, possibly visit local Councils and Mayors, and "mobilise" themselves on the theme of their rights.

That week, I was substituting for the English teacher in the U.E.B. On the Thursday, during the break, the Children's Rights Week started (3 ½ days late), and I was told to go to my form room and 'do' two pages of the pamphlet with the children for the last lesson of the day. These pages were entitled "Progress and Challenges in the Field of Children's and Young People's rights in Bolivia". They explained various aspects of children's lives in Bolivia, and state responses to that situation, such as Bolivia's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, legislation such as the Children's Code, and the establishment of offices of Children's and Adolescents' Ombudsmen (*Defensorías*) in local governments.

I was not entirely sure how I should 'do' these pages with my class of thirteen year olds. Some teachers had been working on the theme of children's rights over their previous few classes, and most of the teachers had had the pamphlets for longer than I had. However, my impression was that some had decided to dictate the relevant information to their pupils during that particular class, and that I was expected to do the same. Instead, I chose to do some discussion exercises about what the children felt their rights and responsibilities were and how they could be protected. Initially they were bemused by me and by my style of teaching, but eventually we settled into a reasonably articulate discussion with a high degree of pupil participation, albeit focussed on my questions and what I wrote on the blackboard.⁵ Although the pamphlet told me that I should "motivate an interactive and democratic dialogue", I found that my students were not used to dialogic exercises, nor to being asked their own opinions. I also found it hard in those

⁵ Given the topic of my thesis, I was delighted to have the opportunity to 'teach' rights, but I was concerned about the ethics of using the details of the classroom discussions we had in my work. Had the experience been later on in my fieldwork, I might have taped the discussions and taken more detailed notes, but I must admit to some ethical confusion at the time. Nonetheless, general impressions gained during these discussions informed my later research.

short lessons to create a democratic but civilised atmosphere. Looking in my field notes, I see that I wrote at the end of the day “Found myself almost shouting, and losing patience. I have a huge admiration for the teachers – could not do it for a job”.⁶

During the first lesson of the following day we all prepared posters and placards in preparation for a demonstration later on. Then we congregated in the playground for our *hora cívica*, which had been explained to me as a “debate”. Some of the older children had prepared displays on rights using newspaper cuttings, pictures, and poems, which they pinned up behind the stage for the rest of us to view. All the children lined up one behind another in their form groups in front of the stage (see Plate 13). We sang the Bolivian National Anthem, listened to a speech by one of the Social Studies teachers, watched a couple of plays and some dance routines, and listened to a poem recital. The children appeared tired, and had difficulty hearing and keeping quiet for the full 2 hours of the ceremony. The *Regenta*⁷ paced around the edges with her metre-long wooden ruler, occasionally hitting or threatening to hit children who were too rowdy. After the *hora cívica*, we went out to march around the zone with our placards in order, as the Headmaster told us, to “show the community” children’s demands for their rights.



Plate 13. Schoolchildren at an *hora cívica*

⁶ I had experience (and training) teaching English in Bolivia and elsewhere before I went to Rosas Pampa. The Rosas Pampa school was one of my more challenging experiences in teaching, more so than teaching a class of over 70 teenagers in Romania a few years before.

⁷ Non-teaching member of staff responsible mainly for discipline.

There are a number of ironies evident from this brief description of Children's Rights Week: for example, the expectation that I would simply dictate information on Children's Rights; the difficulty, if not impossibility, of implementing a participatory methodology, and of conducting many of the activities outlined in the UNICEF pamphlet; the *Regenta* disciplining the children with her wooden ruler while they were learning about their rights and about to go out to demonstrate in favour of them; the debate that was in actual fact a theatrical performance. However, the stress on conformity did not necessarily imply a lack of agency on the pupils' part. In particular, the demonstration was an important event for me, and also for many of the pupils involved, who felt that they were expressing themselves and their right to be heard in their community. Children's Rights Week also sparked off discussions about children's rights in the family with whom I lived, and I suspect in other families too, which was its main intention. The preparation of plays and displays also gave the pupils the opportunity to think about their opinions on children's rights and discuss them among themselves.

In many ways, the Children's Rights Week was paradigmatic of the ways in which the school inducts children into Bolivian society (or interpellates them as citizens, to paraphrase Althusser (1971)). These processes should be understood as operations on and through the bodies of the children – disciplinary techniques in Foucault's terminology (1977) – and from Foucault I also take the institutional focus of the essay. However, I acknowledge that learning and socialisation occurs in many settings, and not solely in the school⁸.

Nonetheless, the school as institution is central to the lives of the children of Rosas Pampa, if not dominant: it structures their friendships, their time, and their physical appearance, for example. And investigating the operations of the school need not limit us

⁸ See Pelissier for an overview of anthropological approaches to learning. There is much good ethnographic work about learning processes (e.g. Bourdieu 1977; Borofsky 1990; Toren 1990; Gow 1991; Stafford 1995; Bloch 1998), but anthropological studies of socialization have either ignored schooling altogether (Borofsky 1990) or tended to present a dichotomous vision of formal 'school knowledge/learning' versus socialization or apprenticeship processes among families and peers, implying that these are more authentic, effective and relevant to children's realities (Toren 1990; Pelissier 1991; Stafford 1995; Bloch 1998). School-based ethnographies conducted in the Third World are rare, in comparison with the large number of First World studies, particularly on the UK, US and Canada (e.g. Willis 1977; Eldering 1996; Hoffman 1998), although a notable exception is Aurolyn Luykx' work in a teacher training college in Bolivia (1999).

to the classroom, or the formal curriculum found in textbooks.⁹ While pupils do attend formal civics classes, they also learn how to be citizens of Bolivia and of Rosas Pampa in many other ways during their school careers, not least in terms of the relationships that develop between the institution (represented by the teachers), the parents and the pupils. Throughout, the pupils are constructing their own meanings, and the reconstruction or reorganisation of their experiences adds to the meaning of the experience itself (Dewey 1941). As Christina Toren shows, physical learning is crucial to such cognitive processes, whereby “rule and practice, practice and cognitive scheme” (1990: 231) interact to enable both the expression and constitution of an abstract concept – in Toren’s case, hierarchy, but in my case citizenship.

National education and neoliberal reforms

This sub-section briefly outlines the place of school education in the neoliberal citizenship projects operating in Bolivia today. It is now commonplace to argue for the importance of public education systems in nation-building projects (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990). However, contemporary nation-building projects in schools operate within the context of globalisation: children are not only being inducted into the nation, but into the nation-in-the-world. As Andy Green argues, while “the original function of education systems was to cultivate social integration and cohesion, forging new notions of citizenship and identity ... citizen formation has given way to skills-formation, nation-building to national economic competitiveness” (Green 1997: 4). Bolivia is no exception to the current vogue for neoliberal social policy reform in Latin America, and the most recent set of educational reforms from 1994 responds to just such ideas.

Neoliberal reforms in Latin American educational policy are promoted by the World Bank and the IMF, and have their roots in a combination of financial imperatives and concerns arising from desires to make development more participatory. The World Bank continues to draw on the ‘human capital’ theories of education from the 1960s-80s, which view education as a form of investment which provides both private (individual)

⁹ In fact, much of the discussion of schooling in works of education theory, philosophy and sociology of education turns on where (and how) learning happens within the school (Dewey 1941; Eby 1952; Gutek 1995). As the cognitive anthropologists Lave and Wenger (1999) have shown, people learn through their participation in a ‘community of learners’; and friendship networks also play a crucial part (Willis 1977). Influential works have investigated the ‘hidden curriculum’ of the social organization of the school, and how that leads to reproduction of particular economic and social structures in society in general (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Lynch 1989). More recent work, such as Aurolyn Luykx

and social returns (Woodhall 1995). With Third Way theories increasingly influencing Latin American social policy, decentralisation of funding and creeping privatisation are justified by an ideology of the responsible, self-sustaining and active citizen like that promoted by US Communitarians (Etzioni 1993; Giddens 2001; Gledhill 2001).

Parallel to the development of social policy reforms that respond to standard neoliberal mistrust of the state, and structural adjustment imperatives of decreased spending on public services, the concept of social returns on the investment of education has been widened, from the narrow target of increased labour productivity to broader ideas of human development. It is against this international background that the 1993-7 Bolivian administration of President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada formulated the *Ley de Reforma Educativa* (Educational Reform Law, LRE) of 1994.

Despite the global orientation of the LRE, allegiance to the nation remains a central part of the reform, as in the notable earlier education reforms of the 1950s, which were about 'cultivating social integration and cohesion' in a post-revolutionary context. Article 1.4 of *Titulo I* of the LRE states that Education:

is national, because it responds to the vital demands of the country in its diversity of geographical-cultural regions, seeking integration and solidarity among its population for the purpose of the formation of a national consciousness deriving from a common historical destiny. (LRE 1994)

It is also central to the preconceptions and ideas that policy-makers, administrators, teachers and parents bring to the day-to-day operation of the educational system, not least because of their own experiences of schooling (Luykx 1999). This project of creating allegiance to the nation is the overarching citizenship project I discuss in this chapter, although my argument is that it is implemented in varying and often contradictory ways.

Pedagogy and the passive citizen

The following sections examine events and ceremonies sponsored by the school as well as pedagogical methods and relationships within the classroom. I investigate the interplay

(1999), provides more sophistication to the 'hidden curriculum' thesis, discussing resistance from pupils, for example.

between established and newer vocabularies of school practice with a view to illustrating some of the complex ways in which the Bolivian schooling system seeks to

“Strengthen national identity, exalting the historical and cultural values of the Bolivian Nation in her significant diversity, and multicultural and multiregional wealth.” (LRE 1994, Tit I Art 2.4)

This section focuses on the classroom, and the tension between active and passive citizenship as expressed in pedagogical approaches. I argue that these tensions are played out in a context of extremely limited resources, which means that teachers tend towards a passive, transmissive model of teaching, despite their good intentions and the intentions of the educational reform.

The LRE states that the school curriculum should promote “a conception of education based upon research, creativity, questioning, horizontal relationships, hope and the construction of knowledge; founded upon the most up-to-date learning methods” (LRE 1994 Titulo II Cap IV Art 8). Similarly, the Children’s Rights Week pamphlet proposes a work methodology that is “participatory, critical, flexible and integral, to be implemented through activities in a four-stage process, during which boys, girls and adolescents will enjoy active participation and will be protagonists, with motivation and support from their educators.” It describes a wonderful-sounding progression of activities that would lead to effective, fun and active learning of rights over the whole of Children’s Rights week. In the U.E.B., however, we had less than two days for the activities, and the part of the pamphlet that I was expected to ‘do’ was that containing background statistical and legal information on rights, rather than activities using and developing children’s concepts of their own rights. The dissonance between the officially stated methodological aims of Education policy documents and legislation and what it is actually possible to do in schools is a key aspect to understanding the schooling system in Bolivia.

On the whole, the dominant model of schooling in Bolivia is transmissive, drawing inspiration from pedagogical approaches such as those of the Jesuits, and centring on the teacher as authority, and with an emphasis on dictation, copying, and repetition (Gutek 1995; Gottret 1999; Luykx 1999). I particularly remember one homework assignment given to a 13 year-old boy in the family with whom I was living. He had to copy out a story from a textbook, word for word and from beginning to end. Another night I came home for tea to find his 8 year old brother writing out all the numbers from 1 to 500 in

his exercise book as a maths assignment. These might be appropriate techniques for developing individual students' copying skills, but regularly giving such assignments to the whole class belies the stated policy emphasis on encouraging students' creativity and active learning; and there is no reason to assume that the U.E.B. in Rosas Pampa is atypical. The teachers in Rosas Pampa were on the whole extremely committed to their jobs, and many were enthusiastic about the new pedagogical approaches that they were being encouraged to develop as a result of the Education Reform Legislation. One of the Social Studies teachers in particular was very keen on these new challenges.¹⁰

Methodologically, he argued that he now wanted to produce "critical, reflexive, analytic" students, and that he saw himself as a facilitator, drawing on Freiran models of pedagogy. However, he was at the more enthusiastic, skilled and flexible end of the spectrum of teachers, and his aims would be very difficult to achieve, as discussed later in the chapter.

The new challenges posed by the reform include an increasing emphasis on more active assignments for the older pupils: "research projects", about which students were in general very enthusiastic. The usual pattern for such projects was for the pupil to carefully copy out photocopied pages of textbooks given to her or him by the teacher, ready for reading to the class when it came to presentations. The most important research exercises were set for the exhibitions ('ferias') held at the end of the academic year. These represented the culmination of the pupils' studies for that year, and an opportunity for them to demonstrate their work to their parents, although not many parents came to the Art and Social Studies fairs that I attended, largely because they were held in the mornings.¹¹ The school playground was set out with tables where groups of four to six students had prepared displays and talks on the subject they had been given. Sweltering under the strong sun, they waited for judges to come round, listen to their presentation and give them each marks ('puntos'), which contributed to their final grade for that term. As a judge on both occasions, I completed half what the other teachers managed in the same time. I was not given a detailed indication of what criteria to use in my marking, except that the Social Studies teacher asked me to give credit for critical thinking and analytic ability.

¹⁰ His enthusiasm in fact surprised me, as the general impression I had of teachers' attitudes to the Reforma, gleaned from the press and some of the literature (e.g. Gill 1998), was one of pure hostility.

¹¹ Many parents did, however, come to watch the PE and Music joint exhibition, held in the afternoon and evening.

In fact, I decided not to grade on that basis, for I would have had to fail most of the students on those exact criteria, although, as their teacher agreed, the younger ones were at least more creative than the older ones¹². Many of the students showed real ability in their artistic presentations, exhibiting, for example, illustrations of Renaissance and modern art, maps of Bolivia, portraits of key people, and pictures of the Bolivian flag and coat of arms. Education in the manipulation of the formal symbols of Bolivianness, such as the flag, or the map, can certainly be said to be thorough in Rosas Pampa. Nonetheless, the pupils had, without exception, copied their illustrations¹³ and it surprised me that the text of their talks was almost always directly taken from the photocopied textbook pages they had been given by their teachers, with no attempt to hide the fact. The questions I asked, such as what Renaissance pictures one group liked and why, unsettled the students, although, with encouragement, they were of course able to express their opinions.

Example: teaching English

I experienced the teaching conditions directly when I substituted for the local English teacher for a couple of months. I usually found myself in front of classes of between forty and fifty children, crowded three to a desk, sometimes four, in a room that smelled from lack of ventilation and excess of bodies. The boys were rowdy, their messing about amplified by the acoustics of the rooms, which had concrete floors and walls, and no curtains or blinds at the windows; and the girls were shy and giggly. I found it impossible to do any meaningful, interesting work. For example, group work was hindered by the fact that the desks were like pews, and getting the children to move them in order to enable face-to-face work created chaos, taking half the lesson. I ended up making myself hoarse trying, and failing, to keep them quiet.

Although I had previous experience and training as an English teacher, I make no claims for my personal ability to teach forty thirteen-year-olds in such circumstances, and I greatly admire the work of the teachers that do it. I feel sure that most gain far more

¹² This illustrates an important point about the initiatives of the Education Reform, which is that it will take time before they have a widespread impact. The Reforms have been focussed upon younger children initially, and, as with any policy measure, it will take time to implement – to train teachers, provide materials, and so on. However, although those pupils who were 17 at the time of my fieldwork were not the main subjects of the education policies derived from the Reform, many teachers had been thinking about new approaches to their own pedagogical practice, and were trying to implement them.

¹³ And many of them may have been borrowed from older students who had used them in previous fairs: I know of one group who used an older brother's drawings for their presentation.

respect from their charges than I managed. But in such conditions, it is understandable that teachers resort to pedagogical approaches which enhance student passivity. Grand ideas of creating an atmosphere where the student can develop the ability to be critical and to control their learning, as found in Education Ministry policy statements and UNICEF pamphlets, lose out to the more straightforward methods of dictation and copying. After all, imitation is also a well-established way to learn skills (Borofsky 1990; Gow 1991; Bloch 1998). Such methods also have the advantage of solving the problem of limited teaching materials. The only teaching aids available to me were an uneven black painted patch on the wall and chalk; not all of the children had textbooks, let alone coloured pencils or paper.

When I set an end-of-year English exam for a class of 18 year olds, I found myself colluding in the pretence of successful learning and teaching highlighted by Bourdieu and Passeron (1977: 108)¹⁴, allowing them to copy answers from each other¹⁵, and gain marks where I knew that they had not understood. After five years of English lessons, the sum total of their ability consisted in being able to chant the numbers from one to ten. They were, without exception, extremely uncomfortable with exercises such as role-plays that asked them to use the language they had been presented with that lesson. They preferred to translate directly their textbook phrases into Spanish, and attempt to fill in the gaps through doing the process the other way round. What was missing was the key to learning a language, namely creativity and genuine understanding, even at a very basic level. Although English is a subject that is particularly badly taught in most Bolivian schools¹⁶, this is one example of the effects of a system of schooling that is in effect

¹⁴ Aurolyn Luykx, drawing on McNeil's work in the US, argues that methods that rely on copying, dictation and rote learning are part of a "teacher-student pact to minimize effort", resulting because "overwhelmed, bored and perpetually behind in the race to cover content, teachers and students meet in the in the path of least resistance" (1999: 185). Part of this strategy of "least resistance" is a collusion between teachers and pupils in the pretence, usually during the examination, that teaching and learning has taken place. The students resign themselves to tolerating and only approximately understanding the "semantic fog" of classes (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977: 108), and with teachers develop a "complicity of misunderstanding" (Luykx 1999: 186). This might sound familiar to anyone who has taught, and is almost certainly a feature of all educational establishments.

¹⁵ Although this is in any case difficult to avoid when there are three pupils at desks designed for two.

¹⁶ In Bolivia, access to competency in English is dependent on wealth. There are only a few private schools or English-language institutions where English is taught competently, but most of those with political or economic power have been educated in American universities. One of the main private English-teaching centres was contracted by the government to set up a training scheme for teachers in 1999, but their entry requirement was that the teacher be able to speak enough English that they could be taught in English, a requirement which the teachers in poor areas such as El Alto cannot fulfil. The institution was not prepared to compromise on this requirement, which will simply perpetuate the division. In fact, the majority of *Alteño* children should be at an advantage when learning English, as they are effectively

“designed to produce passive student-subjects rather than critical and active learners” (Luykx 1999: 173). Still, it should be remembered that the pedagogical choices made by institutions and individual teachers vary for many reasons.¹⁷ As the above discussion on material conditions shows, an appreciation of the ways in which pedagogical practices promote student passivity must be tempered with an understanding of the context in which lessons are taught.¹⁸

The absence of a critical approach to school knowledge and the hierarchical nature of the teacher-pupil relationship have implications for the pupils’ citizenship. Some pedagogical theorists, influenced by Paulo Freire’s work (1996 [1970]), argue that where knowledge is constructed as concrete and objective, which the teacher can choose to reveal, a passive, unquestioning form of political being-in-the-world is created for the students; or at least that where students are encouraged to be critical of the production of knowledge and ideology they have the chance to criticise hegemonies and, potentially, change society (Albó 1982; Ellsworth 1992; Giroux 1992, 1997). There is the possibility, then, that passive students are more likely to become passive, unquestioning, citizens. While there is some merit in this position, Bolivians (educated and not) are not generally noted for their passivity, as the mobilisations of April and September 2000 illustrate. However, schooling is crucial in attracting new members to the club of educated modernity, and the consequent growth of a middle class with a stake in the hegemonic Bolivian State. Education is a two-edged sword, as it enables people to question the status quo but also to make more of an investment in it.¹⁹ The position of the teachers illustrates this ambiguity. Clearly, they are not sinister agents of hegemony, deliberately seeking to produce obedient subjects of the Bolivian government. Far from it, in fact, Bolivian

bilingual in Aymara and Spanish. Research has shown that bilingual children learn a third language quicker than monolingual children learn their second language, although there is some disagreement over whether biliteracy or bilingualism is more important. However, what seems to be central is socio-linguistic context, in terms of the value placed on the first language in school and society (Cenoz and Valencia 1994; Klein 1995; Sanz 2000).

¹⁷ Such as the teachers’ own training and individual preferences, national culture (Pepin 1999), or historical context (Gutek 1995; Green 1997).

¹⁸ It may be that there is something about systematising and formalising education that tends towards conservatism and the encouragement of passivity in pupils (Illich 1971). It is perhaps not pupil passivity that is surprising, but the fact that there are some within the Bolivian education system that seem to desire more.

¹⁹ A situation that can sometimes have disastrous consequences, as shown by the experience of Peru, where the terrorist group Sendero Luminoso found most of its adherents among university-educated sons and daughters of peasants and *cholos*, who felt betrayed because the better quality of life implicitly promised them if they increased their levels of education (relative to their parents) had not materialised (Degregori 1991).

teachers have for some time been in the paradoxical position of being at the same time agents of the state and, along with the *cocaleros*, the principal opposition to the government (Gill 1998; Luykx 1999).²⁰ Yet they are complicit in a system of schooling that promotes one version of Bolivianness above all others, and does its best to encourage schoolchildren not to question that.

Pupil and parent responses: managing modernity, belonging to the club.

Faced with the experiences of learning described in the previous section, pupil responses vary. Most of the young people I knew liked school. The ‘messing about’ that so frustrated me as a teacher is not necessarily an indication of lack of interest or motivation. For many, it may be the only, or at least the main, thing that keeps them in the school. School is an environment where children are socialised into communities, through their experiences of making friendships, experimenting with politics, organising collective activities, etc., and through the ways in which they construct meanings from those experiences (Dewey, 1941; Toren, 1990). The young people often expressed to me their enjoyment of school, mainly because it was an opportunity for them to “hang out with friends” (“compartir con los amigos”). They have space to play and mess around, and to be with their peers. Much of their time in school is actually unsupervised, since classes with no teacher due to staff meetings, staff shortages or free periods are left to their own devices. During such times, the supervision is provided by one person, the *Regente* or *Regenta*, who wanders about, keeping the children in their classrooms with the help of the wooden ruler also used during Children’s Rights Week. Although they did not put it like this to me, for the older ones school is an opportunity to be a child, and to escape the responsibilities of paid or unpaid work for part of the day. Children worked at home in cooking, cleaning, supervising younger children, and other domestic chores, as well as outside their home. I knew schoolchildren who sold in the market with or instead of their parents. One 17 year old had her own stall; other children helped in their parents’ shop or worked as *voceadores*²¹; another 17 year old girl was a construction worker in the holidays; and other young people I knew were mechanics and tailors.

²⁰ The teachers’ unions have been vehement in their opposition to many of the Education Reform measures, in particular because of provisions for career-long testing and pay-scales related to performance and university training (Gill 1998), and teachers’ strikes for 50% pay increases were central to the mobilisations of September 2000.

²¹ *Voceadores* are young people (usually boys) who ride in buses or mini-buses, shouting out the route and collecting fares from the passengers

However, over the year that I was there, I saw the boy who had been set the copying exercise as homework beginning to lose interest in school, indulging in drinking sessions with friends, playing around during school time, and saying that he wanted to go and work in Brazil. An extremely bright, funny and creative boy, he was simply bored in school. Unfortunately, as I and his family all pointed out to him, sewing in a sweatshop in Brazil is unlikely to be stimulating for him either, and we attempted to persuade him to stay, at least until he only had a couple of years left before graduation. I later heard that he had left school temporarily in order to work in Brazil. He was not alone: I was unable to ascertain exact dropout rates, but they are high. Some of the younger year groups have as many as 90 pupils, while the graduating class usually has about 50.

Those who do not lose interest or drop out for other reasons, such as pregnancy or other family responsibilities, become part of a set of notional exchanges: in the classroom, pupils exchange respect for the teacher for knowledge. Knowledge is then exchanged for qualifications, qualifications for pay, pay for goods and services (Willis 1977: 64). The knowledge at the heart of this system of exchange is of a particular, measurable, and somewhat rarefied kind, and is highly valued in Rosas Pampa. Or, at least, the qualifications that result are highly valued. Like schoolchildren everywhere, the pupils' most important 'educational' concern in school is that they pass the evaluation requirements made of them – points ('puntos') are key. In order to gain cooperation from the students with group interviews that I wanted to conduct towards the end of my fieldwork, I agreed with the Social Studies teacher that they could be worth points, thus giving them an incentive to participate. I told them that I would be grading them on how they expressed their own opinions, so that it would be easy for them to earn good grades through participating. It remained voluntary, and not everyone turned up; several sessions had to be cancelled because no one was there at all, such as when one of the classes was preparing for an exam in chemistry to be held after their free lesson. Chemistry points were obviously of higher priority at that moment. Without the incentive of points, though, I knew that no one would bother to come at all. I also wanted to reward them for their cooperation and friendship over my year in the school.

Parents also place a great deal of emphasis on education, and are prepared to expend much money and effort on their children's schooling. Indeed, one of the main reasons that people migrate to El Alto and La Paz has been education, either for themselves or

for their children (Albó, Greaves et al. 1981; 1982; 1983). And the ceremonies that mark the young adults' successful negotiation of the first stage of the process of becoming modern – i.e. graduation from secondary school – are elaborate, expensive and very well attended. The graduation year is marked by two important ceremonies, which underline the importance of formal education: the graduation itself and, prior to that, the *toma de nombre* (name-taking), which is where the godfather of the graduating class is formally instituted, and the class becomes known as 'the class of 2000 [graduating year] – Jose Luis Martínez [name of godparent]'. I attended the graduation of the class of 1999, as one of the godparents – the pupils and their form teacher had not managed to find a sponsor, so the teachers clubbed together to pay for the room, the PA system, invitations and banners for each pupil. I also attended the *toma de nombre* ceremony for 2000. Both were held in venues outside of Rosas Pampa, and included the singing of the national anthem, followed by speeches from pupils, teachers and the godparents, and a recitation of a poem or musical act.

The invitations that had been distributed to families and friends named all of the graduating pupils individually.²² During the ceremony, each one approached the class godfather to receive, in the *toma de nombre*, a flower and pin badge; during the graduation ceremony, the pupils approached the godparents to receive a certificate and a banner commemorating their graduation. They were accompanied to the front in the *toma de nombre* by a boy or girl from the class below; or, in the graduation, by their individual godmother or godfather. When they had finished their solemn procession to the stage, they were handed over to the godfather of the class to receive the gifts and a few words, accompanied by popping flashbulbs from the professional photographers and family members with cameras. After the ceremony and speeches, there is a meal provided for the teachers and godfather, while some of the families present bring out food that they have prepared at home and brought along in saucepans. Then, the music begins and those present get up to dance, drink, and give gifts to the graduate. When I attended a graduation ceremony in Quilloma, I was godmother to one of the 6 boys graduating. I had to accompany my godchild to the stage, sit there during the speeches, and host the subsequent celebratory drinking, distributing drink to all those who came to congratulate

²² In 1999, 49 pupils; in 2000, 56.

him. During the *toma de nombre*, after the meal, ‘Tren’ Martinez and his wife came round to meet and greet each family.²³

The ceremonies themselves are extremely important events. Families dress up for them, they buy their children new 430 Bs (c. US\$80²⁴) suits in the material chosen by the class group, give gifts, and pay for drink, transport to and from the locale, etc. The *toma de nombre* of her eldest daughter was one of the only two occasions during the year that I saw my *comadre* put on a bowler hat rather than her normal day-to-day straw hat; the other occasion being when we baptised her youngest daughter. Both ceremonies were similar, in that they were initiation rites. The ceremonies around graduation are a time where the young people are the centre of attention and when their hard work is recognised, and they have a chance to display their achievements. They get their photos taken, they are toasted, and they receive gifts such as blankets that represent their entry into the adult (and modern) world. The moment is marked by mountains of *mistura* (confetti) which covers everyone, including the parents of the graduates, who are also congratulated.

Graduation is in fact a big achievement for the children, many of whose parents left school after primary level. However, it is increasingly necessary: Carlos was a mechanic, but he could not get a job in a mechanic’s office without proof of graduation from secondary school, as I described in Chapter 6. This is evidence of what Ronald Dore (1976) terms ‘credentialism’ and ‘diploma deflation’, where employers demand what are in practical terms unnecessary credentials in order to choose between applicants. This sets up a vicious cycle where, as more people earn higher qualifications, jobs that in the past required secondary school graduation certificates start going to people with university degrees, because there are more graduates from secondary school. Jobs that required undergraduate degrees then require a Masters, and so on. The value of each diploma has deflated.

But people are undeterred: in group interviews and informal conversations with students nearing graduation, the ambition that they most often expressed was to “salir profesional”, meaning to graduate from University. Only one student said that she was

²³ He’s an aspiring politician. See Chapter 3.

²⁴ For comparison, a teacher’s salary at the time was 350 Bs a month, just under US\$ 60.

keener to go into commerce (in the informal economy) full time; and I thought she was one of the more critical and politically sophisticated of all of them. At graduation ceremonies, the invocation to continue their studies was constantly repeated by godparents, teachers, visiting dignitaries and students; the slogan chosen by the graduating class of 1999 emphasised the fact that the pupils had not finished:

“This is not the end of the road, but the beginning of success because we are going to start again.”

(“Este no es el fin del camino, sino, el principio del éxito porque volvemos a empezar.”)

I went to the graduation ceremony in a small rural school, the sixth in the school's lifetime, and where six pupils (all boys) graduated. As I listened to the various speeches, I was astonished to hear all of the speakers impress upon the students that they hadn't achieved anything yet, other than to enable themselves to continue their education at university. As more people gain higher qualifications, their prestige is eroded, and membership of the exclusive club of the educated requires lengthier study for each generation. The popular classes are always running to keep up.²⁵

Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) point out that the stress on education reproduces structures of oppression in society, through making exclusion seem the fault of the excluded.²⁶ In a development context, during the 1970s, many modernization theorists considered schooling central for developing countries: Inkeles and Holsinger argued approvingly that “the school renders one modern not only in value and attitude, but in one's basic personality”(1974)²⁷. The over-emphasis on formal education systems was trenchantly criticised then (Illich 1971), but has seemingly reached the status of

²⁵ Bourdieu argues that:

It is written into the tacit definition of the academic qualification *formally* guaranteeing a specific competence ... that it *really* guarantees possession of a 'general culture' whose breadth is proportionate to the prestige of the qualification. (Bourdieu 1986: 25)

²⁶ This privileged instrument of the bourgeois sociodicy [i.e. school] which confers on the privileged the supreme privilege of not seeing themselves as privileged manages the more easily to convince the disinherited that they owe their scholastic and social destiny to their lack of gifts or merits, because in matters of culture absolute dispossession excludes awareness of being dispossessed. (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977: 210)

²⁷ For many of the studies of 'Third World' education, school is either a development problem (Inkeles and Holsinger 1974; Fuller 1991; Watkins 2000) or a place where children go to learn things that their parents cannot teach them, principally how to manage modernity (Gow 1991; Stafford 1995; Bloch 1998). Both paradigms view the school as the instrument of modernisation and state incursion into communities, though they do not always agree on whether this is a good or bad thing.

unquestionable truth more recently.²⁸ Displaying the dominance of a Rawlsian vision of social justice as the distribution of public goods (Rawls 1972), it has become absolutely imperative to provide more education, which means more schools and more children in those schools for longer. Theorists dispute the amount, cost and quality of schooling, but not the validity of schooling per se (Scrase 1997; Welch 2000). Paradoxically, while modern mass education in Bolivia seeks to create a sense of “social integration and cohesion” (Green 1997), as shown earlier, it also in part aims to produce atomised citizens, who interpret their subsequent position in society as based upon their individual capabilities.

Performance and the Ethnic citizen

The analysis of this section moves out of the classroom to school ceremonies, particularly the *hora cívica*, which I referred to briefly in my description of Children’s Rights Week. Through an investigation of these ceremonies, I question the ways in which the *pluri-multi* vision of citizenship actually operates in practice. The LRE states that

[Bolivian Education] is intercultural and bilingual, because it presumes the socio-cultural heterogeneity of the country, in an environment of respect between all Bolivians, men and women. (LRE 1994 Título I Art. 1. 5)

However, as in most countries, membership of the club of the educated in Bolivia is marked by particular ‘aesthetic dispositions’ which are oriented towards ‘legitimate culture’ (Bourdieu 1986). Yet what is particular to Bolivia is the ethnicised nature of the cultural markers and aesthetic dispositions. Despite the ‘intercultural’ rhetoric of the LRE, the modernising/civilising projects of the school require a fairly concentrated campaign during the child’s school career to erase the indigenous part of their identity, or at least distance them from it, in order that they become good Bolivian citizens. This is illustrated well by the example of a research-based homework assignment given to the thirteen to fourteen year olds. They were told to research the following statement: “Art expresses human feeling and measures the cultural level of peoples” (“El Arte expresa el sentimiento humano y mide el grado cultural de los pueblos”). The line they were supposed to take (i.e. agreement) was made clear to them when the assignment was set. This vision of art and high culture must be placed in the context of a curriculum that

²⁸ Numerous development policy documents argue that education positively affects infant mortality, fertility, child nutrition, gender equality etc., correlations which now seem to enjoy the status of unarguable

focussed very strongly on canonical Western notions of what art is important, teaching the pupils about movements such as the European Renaissance and Cubism. Absent from the curriculum, to my knowledge, was any treatment of Bolivian artistic production, such as in textiles. The implication of this research project was that Bolivia did not have art, and therefore people, of a sufficiently high 'cultural level' to be worthy of study. In this instance, Bolivian culture, particularly indigenous Bolivian culture, was not honoured or revered, but ignored and by implication disparaged. This impression was reinforced for me during a group presentation about "Integration projects" during the Social Studies exhibition, when one 17-year-old pupil told me that the Spaniards brought over a "better culture" (weapons, metallurgy and the Catholic religion) when they colonised Latin America.²⁹ I argue in this section that the *hora cívica* is central to the process by which children are distanced from the indigenous part of their identity.

One student, when asked in a group interview to talk about *horas cívicas*, said:

"I think that they demonstrate what abilities, what virtues we have; they also demonstrate civic dates, I think. Like the other day, our Flag Day, taught us the first flag, the second flag, the third, how to use it, how you shouldn't use it, so it showed us many things."

("yo creo que estos sirven para demostrar las habilidades, los virtudes que tenemos; sirve también para mostrarle algo, como decir, fechas cívicas, como el otro día, nuestra Día de la Bandera, no ve, nos enseñaba la primera bandera, la segunda bandera, la tercera, como se maneja, como no hay que manejar la bandera, entonces nos demuestra muchas cosas.")

Her fellow student added:

"To start with, *hora cívica*, it's, well, in order to remember something that happened a long time ago; an *hora cívica* is about honouring that date and those people."

("Para empezar, las horas cívicas, es algo como, o sea, es para recordar un hecho que ha pasado hace tiempo; horas cívicas es dar honor a esa fecha, y a los personajes.")

fact in development discourse (e.g. Department for International Development 2000; Watkins 2000; World Bank 2001).

²⁹ This pupil was very bright and interested, and out of school expressed some strongly-held political views. He told me that the group had asked to research MERCOSUR and NAFTA, but had been told that they should stick to the historical integration projects in their textbook, another example of the unwitting stifling of active and creative learning.

Horas cívicas are usually held on important historical dates, as the quotes above indicate. I counted 13 separate planned *horas cívicas* for one school year, for dates as diverse as Independence Day and the Day of the Teacher. These official ceremonies would also be supplemented with one-off occasions such as the inauguration of new classroom buildings. They open with the whole school singing the National Anthem, followed by speeches from the Headmaster, his deputy, and/or the teachers. After listening to the speeches, the children stand and watch various acts put on by fellow pupils and teachers. Usually, and especially if there were enough guest dignitaries sitting on the stage, the action would take place in front of the stage, the children making a rectangular space (encouraged by the *Regenta's* large wooden ruler) for their fellow pupils to perform in. Sometimes the performers would be on the stage itself. The acts can include poems³⁰, plays, music, dance, or sketches, but it is not always easy to hear what is going on.

The pupils learn about the things, events and people that they are honouring through speeches by teachers or the headmaster. Over their years at school, the repetition means that they are well informed by the end of their school careers. But such formalised content-based learning is only one aspect of the *horas cívicas*. One student, from a slightly more rowdy group interview that was all boys, said that *horas cívicas* were “in order to suffer a bit” (“para sufrir un poco”). He quickly qualified that with the assertion that “yes, well, remembering the loss [of Bolivia’s access to the sea] on the 23rd of March, is something that makes us suffer³¹” (“si, pues, recordar la perdida del 23 de marzo, es sufrir”), but I think that his comment can be taken quite literally. *Horas cívicas* are particularly physical experiences for the schoolchildren, since they stand in the searing *altiplano* sunlight for the whole ceremony, which lasts around 2 hours, sometimes more. Even the daily speeches by the headmaster at the beginning and/or end of the school day would involve half an hour of standing still, which was not always easy for the children.

³⁰ These included recitations of long poems, such as ‘El Pájaro Revolucionario’, which was a favourite of the two girls who regularly declaimed poetry, for the benefit not only of pupils during *horas cívicas*, but also dignitaries during opening ceremonies for the classrooms, or the Community Centre, and during the graduation ceremonies. The content of this poem is actually remarkably revolutionary, and would, perhaps, be more subversive if it weren’t quite so long; or declared in such a melodramatic manner.

³¹ 23rd of March, the Day of the Sea, is one of the most important days for *horas cívicas* throughout Bolivia. It commemorates the loss of Bolivia’s coastline to Chile in 1879, an event that left the country land-locked. Whenever a Bolivian President is unpopular with the electorate, regardless of his party-political affiliation, he will usually make a speech demanding the sea back from Chile. It is presented in the press as the primary diplomatic issue for Bolivian foreign policy. The Bolivian Navy still exists, based on Lake Titicaca, awaiting a hypothetical diplomatic or military victory over Chile, or perhaps the command to invade the Peruvian half of the Lake.

On one occasion that I witnessed, a young boy fainted, probably suffering from malnutrition, and certainly suffering from the sun.

Culture on display, culture for display

The physical effects of the *horas cívicas* as a form of learning and expressing citizenship are not confined to those watching the ceremonies. The dance routines put on by pupils and teachers are important parts of *horas cívicas*. Sometimes the pupils' routines were set to contemporary, usually American, pop music, which they call 'techno' music; but they mostly consisted of what is generally called 'folkloric' dancing, when a group of six to ten older children would rent costumes and perform a dance, usually for credit in Music or PE. During the Children's Rights week, the graduating class danced a *Llamerada*. During most of the *horas cívicas* I attended, there was also a *Cueca*, usually performed by the teachers as well as pupils; and a music group composed of students often performed and danced *Tarqueadas*. The choice of dances draws on cultural codes that are understood by all.

The *Llamerada* tells the story of llama herders, and is a common feature of *altiplano* anniversary fiestas in the *campo* and the cities. The *Cueca* is a very genteel dance from Cochabamba (a city in the valley region of Bolivia), where men and women wear white shirts and dance with red handkerchiefs. The dancers face each other. It does not have the parade formation that dancers such as the *Llamerada* use, and is not a general feature of fiestas in the *altiplano*. Through dancing the *Cueca*, which is so closely associated with Cochabamba, the teachers expressed a national, as opposed to *altiplano*, sensibility. The *Cueca* also derives historically from Spanish colonial dances. The *Tarqueada* is the oldest dance of the lot, with pre-colonial roots, and is more a particular style of music than a dance with special steps. The musicians of the U.E.B. band used *zampoñas* (panpipes) and drums rather than the brass bands (or cassette tapes of bands) of the other 'folkloric' dances. The choice of *Tarqueada* is complex. On the one hand, many of the students learn *zampoña*, as it is a cheap instrument and fairly easy to play, the equivalent of the recorder in British schools. Also, many of the children grow up listening to their parents play Andean wind music (on cassette or live), which they closely associate with the *campo*. On the other hand, the students and their teachers are also self-consciously 'reviving' and displaying what they consider to be autochthonous, and genuine, dances and music. The Music teacher told me that he was eager to teach the children autochthonous dances,

although somewhat ironically his source for the movements of those dances was a book.³²

Dance is an important means for enjoyment and the physical expression of identity and group adhesion in the *altiplano*, as I argued in Chapter 4. Through the *hora cívica*, the children learn the movements and rehearse the experience of dance as citizenship practice. Then, at the time of the actual anniversary fiesta, they experience this directly, through the school's involvement in the general festivities. But in the school setting, dance is withdrawn from the fiesta atmosphere. The teachers and pupils approach the dances as 'folkloric', as culture for display, and therefore caricature and exoticise the pupils' cultural roots (as rural-urban migrants), taking the dances out of context and making them into items for show. The process of rehearsal is thereby combined with one of decontextualisation; dance (and, by extension, self and citizenship) is separated from the context of the community, the context wherein most adults actually experience it, as the first part of this thesis has shown. The decontextualisation also takes a physical form: dances during the fiesta are usually performed by large numbers of people in a parade-like formation along the roads or around the main square of a neighbourhood or village, whereas in the *hora cívica* smaller groups dance the steps in a very small part of the playground, surrounded on all four sides by onlookers.

The fact that such dances are central to *horas cívicas* illustrates that the school does value pupils' cultural roots, something advocated as an educational value in itself by the promoters of intercultural education (Martínez P. 1995; CEBIAE 1998). However, by decontextualising dance and music which is in fact entirely contemporary, through putting it on display in the school as folklore, and creating what Muratorio has called an "alienated folkloric consciousness" (Muratorio 1980: 51)³³, the school responds to an imperative that highlights Creole, or at best *mestizo*, Bolivia as the source of cultural codes for Bolivian citizens. According to this imperative, integration of the indigenous peoples into that set of codes is key to citizenship. This has been the approach of Bolivian governments since the revolution in 1952.

³² Most of the children probably have family members who could teach them the music and dance without recourse to books.

³³ See chapter 4 for discussion of this.

In the case of children in a migrant community such as Rosas Pampa, where most families originally come from the *campo*, the citizenship projects outlined here require a distancing process from their indigenous roots, their *pueblos*. The decontextualisation of culture is one, figurative, part of this process, but the school also literally distances the children from their *pueblos*. Where their mothers may be visiting the *campo* between once a year and once a week, the children claim that they barely have time to go to visit their grandparents (“los abuelitos”) once a year for the fiesta. In practice, many do go to the fiesta, and/or accompany their parents to help with the potato harvest. Their relationship to their *pueblo* and the *campo* more generally was complex, and their attitudes reveal a sense of being pulled two ways.

The *campo* is characterised from outside in three main ways, all of which the young people demonstrated. First is the kind of image presented by orthodox development discourses of unremitting poverty, deprivation and hardship. Some responses during group discussions expressed this image, but on the whole, the young people’s opinions divided between more realistic and romantic characterisations. So they referred to problems they perceived in the *campo* such as lack of infrastructure like health facilities, roads or communications, but pointed out that the *campo* is only really poor when there are famines or droughts. Some of the comments and pictures they drew demonstrated a more romantic vision of a *campo* where peasants can grow all their own food, surrounded by silence and pure air. Young people commented that “you find some peace there”, “it’s pretty” (“es bonito”); “the air there is pure, here it’s contaminated” (“el aire allá es puro, aquí es contaminado”). All of which are probably objectively true about much of the *altiplano campo*, but they take on a romantic sense when juxtaposed with complaints about the lack of infrastructure and boredom. Skits and dances presented in *horas cívicas* also often include a caricatured ignorant but noble peasant; and I saw children dress up as peasants for fancy dress events, which I thought ironic, because they were often presenting a sanitised but also patronising caricature of their own parents. Aurolyn Luykx describes similar processes in the teacher training college as follows:

The ‘integration’ of indigenous culture into the curriculum often constituted an exercise in contradiction, a superficial valorization of a stereotyped ideal of indigenous identity which cloaked a deeper discourse of denigration. (Luykx 1999: 148)

The mixture of realism and romanticism is a means of both resisting the distancing processes mentioned above and colluding in them; the romanticisation of the *campo*, and

the noble peasant is another part of the processes of 'folkloricisation' and decontextualisation of culture.³⁴ Nonetheless, the young people of course have a healthily sceptical attitude to all this. One boy said his *pueblo* was

“a bit poor, but we don't complain because it has all the best things that no other country has. I have the luck of not being born in Africa”

(“un poco pobre, pero no nos quejamos porque tiene todo lo mejor que no tiene otro país. Tengo la suerte de no haber nacido en África”),

mixing together all three approaches, and with the reference to Africa sparking off giggles among the other members of the group.

Parades – revering the Creole nation

The ethnic specificity of the hegemonic idea of self and citizen is further revealed and reinforced in the parades, a crucial extension of the *horas cívicas* on most important dates.³⁵ The parades revere special anniversaries of the nation, city or urban zone/*pueblo* through the bodies of their participants. On these particular days, adults parade as well as children, although not in such great numbers. They march in blocks of, for example, union affiliation, members of a *Junta Escolar*, or *Junta Vecinal*. Children march along a defined route behind the school band, the baton-twirlers ('huaripoleras') and the school standard-bearers (an honour for the best pupils). At the *palco* – the stage where dignitaries watching the parade sit – the band stands at one side of the road, and the cheerleaders line both sides while the normal parade participants march through, in class groups, and separated by gender (see Plate 14, next page). Sometimes they salute the dignitaries with a raised arm. This is the moment when the marchers have to concentrate on keeping in time, the key moment of display. After the children have marched through, the teachers follow, walking in time to the rhythm of the band. When a school has finished, the band marches off, and after the *palco* everyone disperses.

³⁴ Needless to say, this makes a mockery of the aims of the Reforma at intercultural education.

³⁵ Although not Children's Rights Week.



Plate 14. Schoolchildren parading down Av. 4, Rosas Pampa, on 14 September 2000



Plate 15. Young schoolchildren parading in Villa Dolores, on August 6, 2000

Schoolchildren are both the trainees and the bulk of the overall parade. The youngest ones get to dress up, so that little Simón Bolívars, José San Martíns, nurses and soldiers wow the crowds (see Plate 15).³⁶ On Independence Day, each school has standard bearers holding the flags of each of the nine departments of Bolivia, usually accompanied by a boy and girl in the ‘traditional dress’ of that department. Occasionally, some schools or organisations carry *wiphalas*, the *altiplano* indigenous flag, which is perhaps the only dissonant note in the general celebration of the Creole nation.

The pupils generally seem to enjoy the parades, although one complained to me that they usually start at least an hour and a half late, and meanwhile everyone is waiting, becoming “toast” under the sun. During an all-male focus group there were some mumbles about it being a bit boring; and I noticed that attendance at parades was usually poor. Another student, though, thought that such lack of interest was down to lack of information, and what she called a “*falta de civismo*”, translatable as a “lack of civic virtue”; she even thought that there should be more *horas cívicas*, for example to commemorate the birthdays of each Bolivian president.³⁷ In an important sense, for her, *civismo* is a physical experience, an expression of civic virtues through the body. Her interpretation of *civismo* shows an acute sense of respect for history, and it is particularly a history that privileges the Bolivian national (Creole and male) past.³⁸ Bolivia’s indigenous past (and present, for that matter) is, of course, almost completely absent from the formal celebrations during the school year. The ‘social integration and cohesion’ that the Bolivian school system aims to cultivate relies upon the exclusion of other competing citizenship allegiances, at least at the level of rhetoric and formality.

Many students respond well to such citizenship projects, as illustrated in the following quote:

“My *pueblo* – I think that all of Bolivia is my *pueblo*. My *pueblo* has different cultures, different climates, different people, each one with his/her culture; the *kollas* are here [in the *altiplano*], here with their little *lluchu* and their little poncho; the *chapas* are more happy people, more open; the people from the east, the

³⁶ It costs quite a lot to hire these costumes, so not all parents oblige.

³⁷ Ironic, because Bolivia is famous for a bewildering succession of presidents since Independence, at a rate of nearly one per year of existence as an independent nation.

³⁸ In doing so, it also underlines the importance of the Bolivian state in contemporary every-day life (Harvey 1997).

campas are more, how shall I put it, more liberal³⁹ (...) Our country has different cultures, and also different dances.”

(“Mi pueblo – yo creo que está todo Bolivia mi pueblo. Mi pueblo tiene diferentes culturas, diferentes climas, diferentes personas, cada quién con su cultura; los kollas son aquí, aquí con su lluchito, su ponchito; los chapacos son personas mas alegres, mas abiertas; las personas del oriente, los campas, son personas ya más, como se dice esto, mas liberales ... nuestro país tiene diferentes culturas, y también tiene diferentes danzas.”)

This female student was 17 and one of the more intelligent and successful in the graduating class. Her comments illustrate beautifully the ways in which intercultural education is implemented in the U.E.B. She spoke about her *pueblo* in the context of a discussion on the meaning of the word *pueblo*, which, in the case of her generation, usually means the birth village of their parents. By extending the term *pueblo* to the whole of Bolivia, she was making a strong political point, and demonstrating an orientation to the national sphere that is very prominent in Bolivian schooling. The stereotypes she refers to were common currency, among educated and uneducated people. Somehow, though, they were outside of her self. She did not see herself as a *kolla*, and was faintly patronising about *altiplano* peasants, in her use of the diminutives *lluchitu* and *ponchito*.⁴⁰ Her ‘*interculturalidad*’ is like the ‘*interculturalidad*’ of the Bolivian state: all encompassing but viewed from above/outside.

This is how the two main projects of the LRE, national education and intercultural education,⁴¹ are combined in practice. What seems like an uneasy compromise is made possible through the ambiguities of the legislation and the incomplete commitment of successive governments to a substantive vision of the multicultural nature of the Bolivian nation.⁴²

³⁹ The *campas* are notoriously lazy and promiscuous in the stereotypes usually expressed by *altiplano* people. *Kollas* is slang for people from the *altiplano*; *chapacos* refers to people from Tarija; and *lluchu* is the Aymara name for the woollen hat with ear flaps worn by *altiplano* peasants

⁴⁰ The use of the diminutive is very common in Bolivian Spanish, but quite noticeable here, and not used in the rest of the quote.

⁴¹ Gender equality is present as a desire of the legislation, but reads very much as if it has been ‘tacked on’.

⁴² There is general agreement that intercultural education is necessary for rural areas, where bilingual education has been introduced since 1995. The policy-making elites still do not envisage intercultural education for their own children, in schools in wealthy areas of La Paz. In fact, for many of them, intercultural education in practice means American-Creole. However, peripheral urban areas, with large populations of migrants, fall in between these two extremes, and radical educationalists were arguing at the end of the 1990s for the implementation of a genuinely intercultural education in such areas (Martínez P. 1995; Albó 1999).

The demonstration

However, there is a countervailing tendency operating within the activities of the school, which heightens and expresses local allegiances rather than excluding them, and which paradoxically both underscores and undermines national allegiance. This is illustrated by the second main event in Rosas Pampa's Children's Rights Week, the demonstration. The demo is the third physical form of citizenship expression that I discuss in this essay, having an analogous structure to the fiesta dance (although not the dance in the *horas cívicas*) and the parade.

The pamphlet timetabled "mobilisation and educational fairs" on the theme of "The Bolivia We Want in the 21st Century" for the final day of Children's Rights Week. The authors had probably not envisaged the kind of march that we went on, but it was the logical thing for the Headmaster to organise once he saw that we were supposed to "mobilise". He drew upon his substantial experience of demonstrations throughout his career as a teacher. 1999 was the first time the school had done a march for Children's Rights Week, and afterwards some teachers worried that placards had disappeared, and the children had played around, rather than taking the demonstration seriously. They were probably rather nervous about the discipline necessary to keep control outside of the school. In the event, the children were remarkably well behaved, and walked the half-hour route around a few blocks in the zone with a good deal of enthusiasm. One boy dryly commented that it was designed mainly in order to tire them out, but with the teachers (including me) supervising our form groups, there was little opportunity for the children to run off or lag behind. They were in theory supposed to march in lines, as occurs in parades and adult demonstrations, but the need to dodge the various ruts, puddles and petrol spills in the mud roads soon put paid to that, and the teachers were not especially concerned to enforce discipline to that extent. Curious people came out of their houses to watch us go by, something which was noted later by the young people I talked to. They said they had enjoyed the march, because it allowed them to express themselves, and they thought that people had taken notice of them.

The children were able to exercise their own citizenship as young people, in making demands for respect of their rights by the adults of the zone. In particular, the children saw themselves as demonstrating for the right to be understood and listened to. A group of 16-17 year old girls I chatted to in the churchyard a couple of days after the march

told me that expressing themselves was crucial. They told me that the teachers used to tell them to shut up, but that they now had more freedom of expression in school. They put this down to both attitude change among teachers and the fact that they were a bit older. At the time, they were at the point in their school careers when they knew they were just about to go into the graduating class, which is a time when pupils have enhanced responsibility and prestige.

A year later, one girl who had been in that group brought up the same issue when we discussed differences between parents and children in a focus group. She felt that parents were too restrictive and disciplinarian, and didn't allow their children to express themselves. In October 1999, she had been one of those who said that they felt the need for advice for their parents, so that they would respect their children's rights more. There is a possibility that the march functioned as part of this process. Certainly, in my household, we talked about children's rights that evening. The mother told me that she thought it was particularly important that children have the right to play, and to be children, rather than having to work. She thought that the demonstration was important to tell people in the zone about children's rights, but it didn't go far enough: she thought they should have marched to the El Alto police station, to demand respect for children's rights from the police. A few of the young people I spoke to held similar views: they thought that it would have been better to march down in La Paz, so that the media noticed; marching just in Rosas Pampa was not enough for them.

Nonetheless, it was an important educational experience for the children, giving them a chance to experiment with a crucial form of adult citizenship expression. In the year I lived in Rosas Pampa, adults I knew personally demonstrated at least eight separate times, about:

- Neoliberal reforms in public sector employment
- Demands for pay rises (the teachers)
- Protests about new taxes (the *comerciantes*)
- Demands for more resources for education (the *Junta Escolar*)
- Protests about the underdevelopment of El Alto (the *Junta Vecinal*)
- Protests about new regulations for public transport
- Demands for a university in El Alto
- Demands for back pay for sacked local government workers

They went on demonstrations and observed strikes for two main reasons. First, in many cases people considered it an obligation to participate in demonstrations and strikes. I experienced this when I went to the centre of La Paz to observe the teachers from the U.E.B. demonstrating against new civil service legislation that infringed their right to strike; and the teachers from my school called me in to march with them, telling me I should, because I was a member of the teaching staff. At the end of the march, the union representative took attendance. The demonstration was certainly not an excuse for a day off. The teachers were expected to attend, and a common way of enforcing such compliance is through fining those who do not participate.⁴³ Second, when the unions requested that their members go out on a demonstration, people were usually very willing to do so. They often enjoyed demonstrating, and considered it mostly effective. During 2000, the government would often give in to the demands of protesters, and at least renegotiate legislation (or make a show of so doing). The frequent strikes were well observed, not simply because of the fines; and ordinary people usually supported the strikers. As one friend said to me about the teachers, going on strike “is the only way they have of insisting” (“es la única forma que tienen para insistir”), even though that meant that his little brother’s education was disrupted for over a month. The school was consciously preparing the children for this type of political agency, conceived of collectively.

Respect for authority as promoted in school can thus translate into anything but passive, accepting, citizenship. From an early age, children were learning about the collective, corporate belonging that, I have argued, characterises citizenship of Bolivia. It is easy to ignore a demonstration on the television news, particularly when, as in La Paz and El Alto, they are common events. But in Rosas Pampa there was more chance for the march to provoke discussions, precisely because those who came out to watch the march go by knew the children doing the marching. It is an example of the children acting collectively as citizens of the zone of Rosas Pampa, and shows the importance of such collective action for a sense of political agency.

⁴³ The taxi drivers had more vigorous means of enforcing strike compliance, since they would puncture the tyres of strike-breaking taxis, and sometimes whip (‘huascar’) the drivers. Usually the whipping was symbolic, but still very effective.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have argued that schooling is the archetypal form of citizenship as projects of the self implemented through government, and I have investigated how that operates, and what are the implications for what children learn about political agency. The focus on the local expressed by the march at the end of Children's Rights Week may provide a counterpoint to the national forms of allegiance taught and experienced in the *hora cívica*. But the march, and the parades, also underscored the children's identities as members of a corporate entity, i.e. the school, within the national entity of the Bolivian state. During both of these, the children were rehearsing and performing the forms of corporate identity so noticeable in adult demonstrations and parades, at the same time as they were acting out their own citizenship in relation to the zone where they lived. Thus, although the school attempts to distance the pupils from their cultural roots, represented in their *pueblos*, it is also a crucial institution for the development of a link to the locality of Rosas Pampa among the pupils. Similarly, on the one hand the schooling system seeks to create atomised, individual citizens who see their subsequent place in society as resulting from their own capacities rather than any structural disadvantage (or advantage), and it often succeeds in this aim. On the other, the ways in which the school actually operates encourages the emergence of the more collective senses of self and political agency discussed earlier in this thesis.

The different projects of citizenship that are promoted through the bodies of the schoolchildren are analogous to three different citizenship practices discussed in this chapter: the civic parade, the dance and the demonstration. The civic parade represents an assimilationist Liberal version of citizenship that seeks to create an allegiance to a Creole historical narrative of Bolivia. The dance as experienced during *horas cívicas* represents newer versions of differentiated citizenship based on Communitarianism – *interculturalidad* and the *pluri-multi* – with attendant folkloricisation. The demonstration represents the more localised, rooted and collective sense of citizenship captured in this thesis by the notion of *vecindad*. Although they seem incompatible, the schoolchildren are remarkably skilled at managing all three. They mix them together and choose the aspects they wish to incorporate as part of their senses of self at different times in their lives and

for different purposes. The Evangelical *hermanos* and the women in micro-credit organisations do the same. *Cholo* citizenship in contemporary El Alto can thus be characterised as the adept management of seemingly incompatible conceptions of self and political agency.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

This thesis has argued that the people of Rosas Pampa experience their citizenship of Bolivia and El Alto through being a *vecino/a*. Being a *vecino*, and its allied term, *conocido/a*, involves the construction of relationships with other *vecinos* and with the zone itself. Analysing what I have called people's citizenship practices leads me to conclude that the *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa constitute themselves as a collective political subject (the zone) in their dealings with the state at local and national levels, and in the ways in which many of them conceive of their belonging to El Alto, the department of La Paz and Bolivia. The collective senses of political agency and personhood interact with various projects of personhood that aim to create more individualised political subjects who conceive of their citizenship in a more direct way, so that they become citizens of Bolivia not *vecinos* of Rosas Pampa, or entrepreneurs who act in a market place unfettered by kinship relations, or Protestants with a direct, one-to-one, relationship with Jesus.

Relationship with the state

Chapters 2 and 3 argued that the often strained relationship between citizens and the state constitutes the community of Rosas Pampa as a collective subject, in complex and ambiguous ways. Since the Popular Participation legislation, local government administration has relied upon a sense of zonal identity, and an understanding that the *Junta Vecinal* can act for the zone. The importance of the *Junta Vecinal* and, to a lesser extent, the *Junta Escolar* is therefore reinforced by the state structures, since they are the means by which the (very limited) local government resources are distributed. Thus, in a positive way, the state bureaucracy builds the community of Rosas Pampa. The importance of the Juntas also means that the *vecinos* themselves have an interest in their actions, commenting when they have done well or badly, expressing their expectations and holding their leaders to account. The issue of accountability is linked to corruption, which is understood as the use of public resources for personal gain. Through rumour, gossip and direct accusations of corruption, the *vecinos* enforce a sense of responsibility to the zone, at least for the leaders. To a lesser extent, that responsibility to the zone is also felt by ordinary *vecinos*, because there is also a long history of the zone having to build itself in the absence of an effective state, another reason for the importance of the *Juntas*,

who have also managed resources donated to the zone by private institutions. The sense of collectivity and community is therefore also built in negative relation to the state.

Much the same pertains for the electoral process. The organisation of the Election Day in zones allows the zone itself to act meticulously democratically on Election Day, and to assert its pride in being able to conduct a proper, honest, election. Despite the very individualised relationship between individual citizen and the state that is assumed in voting, many *vecinos* were making calculations of what voting strategy would benefit the zone, switching from Condepa to MIR not because of ideological commitment, but because the MIR were more likely to win. This interacted with clientelism, where both individual and collective interests operated alongside each other. Individual clients attempted to gain future benefit in terms of jobs, while collectively the school managed to gain (some) immediate benefit in the form of cement, chairs, basketball hoops or typewriters. This was at its most intense during the election campaign, but was also important between elections, as the candidates began slowly gaining people's allegiance well before they faced the ballot box. *Alteños* can be said to have exercised their citizenship just as much between the elections as on the day itself. Again, positive and negative relations with the state co-existed. Through engaging directly with institutional politics and local government, and attempting to make politics more representative and directly democratic, the *vecinos* used a positive relation with the state to develop their own sense of their political agency. However, through the distancing evidenced by the general disillusionment with politicians and the rumours of corruption, the *vecinos* constituted themselves as a collective subject (namely the Bolivian people) betrayed by the state, what I have called 'citizens despite the state'.

But institutional politics is not the only way in which the *vecinos* constitute themselves as collective citizens. Networks of social relations reinforced by ritual underpin the importance of the zone for local politics. Chapter 4 describes the most important ritual, the annual anniversary fiesta. This is closely related to the state, again in ambiguous ways. Organising the fiesta is probably the main responsibility each year of the Junta Vecinal, which is so important for local politics; and the fiesta in fact began when the zone of Rosas Pampa was formally instituted by virtue of the establishment of the Junta Vecinal. Calixto's story also illustrates the connections: in order to be allowed to do business in the fiesta, he had to show himself to be a good *vecino* (citizen) by building his kerbstone,

so that the *Alcaldía* would be prepared to pave his street. In addition, the Mayor himself was present at the opening civic parade on the first day of the fiesta. In the *Entrada*, the *vecinos* participate in a chain of belonging that goes up to the national level, dancing their Bolivian identity through their choice of dances from different regions of Bolivia. This is ambiguous because the dances also exoticise the indigenous parts of Bolivian identities, thereby helping to create an “alienated folkloric consciousness”, in Muratorio’s words. However, the fiesta also emphasises the local level of citizenship, creating and reinforcing a sense of belonging to place, to the zone itself. The organisation of the *comparsas* reflects the work and kinship networks that mediate the relationship between individual and zone, building ‘nested affiliations’ that add to the experience of citizenship as an interaction between the nested affiliations of zonal, municipal, regional and national belonging.

Place and self

Chapter 5 argued that the relationship to place is based upon forms of sociality grounded in rural *altiplano* values and religiosity. Place is made social through the incorporation of the spirits and Saints into social networks based upon exchange and commensality, and specifically mediated through alcohol. This is not to claim that such sociality is the only, unchanging form to be found in Rosas Pampa. People move in and out of the zone, and some stay longer and feel more attached to it than others, hence the stress community leaders placed on being *conocido*, and an established *vecino* when they explained the reasons they became, in Chapter 2. In addition, competing forms of community and sociality exist in Rosas Pampa, most specifically Evangelicalism. Crucially, as I discussed in Chapter 5, people also move in and out of Evangelicalism in a ‘hypocritical’ way, something that I consider to be inherent to it, as it relies upon lapsing for its very existence and power.

Evangelicalism operates its competing project of community through working on the persons (and bodies, a point to which I shall return later) of its adherents. It promotes a competing version of the self to that promoted by the colonial Catholicism of the fiesta and the *ch’alla*, so relational and focussed upon the local space. The Evangelicals’ emphasis on the personal religious experience creates the idea that the individual is ontologically prior to the collectivity, rather than defined through their relationships and through their community. This makes Evangelicalism similar to the other more explicitly

citizenship-focussed projects of personhood described in Chapters 7 and 8. These projects, operating in the micro-credit NGOs and the schools of El Alto, essentially aim to create autonomous, bounded individuals, who, in the first case, are prepared to take on the responsibility for their and their families' welfare in the face of state withdrawal from social provisioning. In schools, the state even more explicitly seeks to create modern Bolivian citizens who are distanced from their place of origin and their cultural roots, and who preferably attribute their place in society to their individual capacities (or failings) rather than to any structural forms of advantage or disadvantage.

As with the Evangelicals, such projects require a considerable amount of work and effort which concentrates on the bodies of the subjects – in the micro-credit groups' education for healthy and moderate reproduction, and in the training of schoolchildren's bodies in parades, *horas cívicas*, and dances. The techniques of the self described in Chapters 5, 7 and 8 are pretty wide-ranging, and extend to very intimate realms. However, the more relational version of the self that is the foundation of being a *vecino* of Rosas Pampa cannot be assumed either, as the case study of Chapter 6 made clear. There, the families joined together to attempt to instil a particular sense of personhood into Victoria and Carlos, one that was defined through their responsibilities to each other and to their child, expressed in the emphasis given to the values of *aguantar* and sacrifice. The dynamic nature of this process shows, first, the amount of work required, and second, the fact that these particular projects of personhood are not always successful, and never easy. It also illustrated the ambiguous role of the state, inasmuch as where Doña Josefa attempted to call in the authorities to regulate a relationship conceived in law as between two (bounded, relatively autonomous) individuals, she caused considerable friction.

Furthermore, the individualising thrust of the more explicit citizenship projects described in Chapters 7 and 8 is balanced (or undermined) by the understandings of self as collective on the part of the subjects of those projects and those implementing them. Thus, the micro-credit NGOs rely upon kinship- and *vecino*-based economic rationalities and networks to ensure repayment of the loans. The school also teaches collective agency (in the example of the demonstration), and provides the pupils with the tools with which to question the status quo as well as buy into it.

Individual-collective

In practice, then, people's bodies are sites for struggles over differing versions of self and citizenship, which forge different conceptions of the political subject as individual or collective. These struggles are dynamic projects, which have a long historical tradition, and their current manifestation as described in this thesis has much to do with contemporary global politics and economics. They rely upon different senses of self and person in order to function. This thesis has argued that contemporary political theory of citizenship's treatment of this individual-collective dilemma is inadequate. In Liberal thought, the individual self (abstracted but in practice, male) is the unique source of agency. In Communitarian thought, the self-conscious individual is subordinate to the role defined for them by the community, which is depicted as homogeneous and uncontested. Nonetheless, both view the individual as prior to the community, just that in the latter case the individual is acting out a role dictated by the community. This thesis is a case study of a situation where those conceptions of the self do not always pertain, since individuals are created through their relations, which include place-made-social. Thus, a slightly different notion of political agency, and political being-in-the-world is created, one that combines a strong sense of collectivity and collective agency with room for individual manoeuvre.

That manoeuvre is to be found in the ambiguities scattered throughout this thesis: the lapses of the Evangelicals and the wholesale adoption of Evangelicalism; the disagreements between Victoria, Carlos and their parents; the school children who get bored being "toasted" in the sun on civic parades; the corrupt community leaders, and the acceptance *and* disapproval of their corruption; the women who ignore the human development *capacitaciones*, and those who agree entirely, or partially, with the need to visit the local health centre for every medical complaint. The ambiguities also lie in those *vecinos* who do not view themselves as such, either because they consider themselves to be middle-class citizens of La Paz, El Alto or Bolivia, or because they feel more strongly that they belong to their *pueblos*. Of course, nobody takes any one position consistently, and the mixing and ambivalence is one of the most important aspects of *cholo* identity. By ending on this cautious note, and peopling my thesis with real, identifiable, characters, I have attempted to do justice to the agency that is located in the fluidity of their identities and daily lives.

APPENDIX I
SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE CATECHIST YOUTH
GROUP OF ROSAS PAMPA CHAPEL, ROSAS PAMPA, EL ALTO.

JULY-AUGUST 2000

Introduction and Methods

I conducted a census of Rosas Pampa with the help of members of the youth group of the local Catholic Church. I designed the questions with the local Catechista, who ran the youth group. I attempted to create the survey through a participatory process involving the young people, but this was not as successful as I had hoped, as they did not attend the meetings organised. However, eight groups of one-two young people conducted the survey, for payment per sheet that they filled in. This was a slightly risky strategy, because I was not sure how the young people (aged between 14 and 20) would present themselves and ask the questions, or if they would follow the methodology I designed for getting a representative sample. Some may have simply surveyed people all on one street. I found out later that one had told some people that he was surveying on behalf of the Catholic Church, for the purposes of finding out how many presents they should distribute at Christmas! More usually, because the survey was clearly under the auspices of the Catholic Church, I suspect that some respondents exaggerated their attendance at church, their involvement in civic organisations, and their poverty, among other things. There was also a danger that respondents would not like a fellow resident of the zone knowing personal details, although the survey was designed fairly impersonally, as the question sheet reproduced at the end of this Appendix demonstrates. The young people also presented the data in different ways, which I had to take into account when I coded it afterwards. I coded in all the survey sheets, to keep consistency at this level.

However, these negative factors were far outweighed by the fact that the young people knew their own zone well, and in many cases knew the families, because I asked them to survey areas near their houses if possible. This allowed them a level of access far superior to that I would expect if the survey had been conducted by experienced researchers, including (especially) myself. The involvement of the Catholic Church gave the survey some legitimacy. According to the figures they returned, I estimated that we had about an 85-90% response rate. The young people were also able to ask for collaboration and

frame the questions in an appropriate way. Another benefit was that some of them really enjoyed the experience of conducting the survey, and finding out more about their zone.

Scientifically, therefore, the data is slightly dirty, but I have tried to compensate for this by pointing out where I think there might be problems. The total sample was of 179 households, with 947 people described. There are approximately 1000 plots of land in Rosas Pampa and the annex (the *barranco*), 800 and 200 respectively. I was aiming at a sample of 20%, and we achieved 17.9%. To keep the sample as random as possible, but with a simple rubric, I asked the young people to survey every fifth house they passed, asking for someone to tell them about the members of the household. Where people were not in, or where they did not want to collaborate, to ask at the house next door.

Results

1. Estimated population of Rosas Pampa

Rosas Pampa has approximately 5300 inhabitants; with approximately 1980, or 37%, under 16 and 3100 (58%) over 16. 4% of respondents did not specify their age. Rosas Pampa has a young population, indicated by the age breakdown given below.

Age	0-15	16-35	36-55	56+	Unspecified	Total
Number	354	293	237	24	39	947
Percentage	37.4%	31%	25.0%	2.5%	4.1%	100%

2. General information

Of the households in the sample, 65% own their houses, and 25% rent. The other 10% either look after the house for another person, or have an *anticretico* or other arrangement. I asked the young people to fill in the 'Personal Principal', in order to get this statistic of house-holding. Although I suspect that they did not adhere to this strictly, interestingly I found that 48% of those 'Personas Principales' were women. This is not an indication of the number of households headed by lone females, and possibly resulted from the fact that it would have been the principal woman who responded to the survey. It is interesting, nonetheless.

An average of 5.29 people live in each household, and each family has an average of 3.12 children (range of children in sample was 1-9, median was 3). Respondents had lived in

Rosas Pampa an average of 9.04 years; 5.08 for those under 16, and 10.2 for those over 16. 26% had lived in Rosas Pampa all their lives, the majority of those being under 16.

3. Cultural background and languages

46% of respondents were born in the countryside. Of the over-16 year olds, 61% were born in the countryside, 39% in the city; while for the under-16 year olds, the figures were 19% and 81% respectively.

We asked how many times people visit their *pueblo*. The majority go between 2 and 4 times a year. The following table provides a breakdown according to gender and age.

<i>Times a year visits pueblo</i>	>16 male (%)	>16 female (%)	<16 (%)
0	23	17	21
1	14	14	16
Unspecified – few	2	1	2
2-4	20	25	31
Unspecified – sometimes	5	5	7
5-8	9	9	5
9-11	2	2	0
12	15	15	16
Unspecified – a lot	6	8	1
13+	5	5	1
Total	100	100	100

The majority of respondents were bilingual Spanish-Aymara, with a marked difference between the over-16s and under-16s, as the following table shows:

Language	>16 (%)	<16 (%)
Spanish and Aymara	71	18
Spanish	21	80
Aymara	3	2
Spanish and Quechua	1	
Spanish/ Quechua/ Aymara	4	
Total	100	100

4. Work and income

For over 16s, the unemployment rate was 3%. The descriptions of employment varied according to the young people, and there was a wide variety of jobs mentioned. I post-coded these, and found that the principal jobs for women over 16 were: housewife (33%), *comerciante* or shop-owner (26%) and student (24%). The men had a greater variety

of employment, but the principal occupations were: truck, bus or taxi drivers (18%), student (16%), and artisans, carpenters or mechanics (13%). 3% of women and 3% of men were farmers.

An indication of the security of work for men and women is illustrated in the following table:

<i>Type of work</i>	Men >16 (%)	Women >16 (%)
Temporary	10	2
Salaried	16	4
Self-employed	27	19
Doesn't work (includes students)	46	52
Housewife	1	23 ¹
Total	100	100

Place of work for adults is indicated in the following table:

Place	%
Rosas Pampa	35
El Alto	30
La Paz	12
Countryside – La Paz	3
Other cities in Bolivia	3
Various	2
Other, not specified	15
Total	100

Those working in Rosas Pampa included housewives, but a break down of where people worked according to the job they had showed that it was rare for people to work in the city of La Paz. *Comerciantes* principally worked in El Alto, those with a shop usually worked in Rosas Pampa, obviously. Those working as artisans, mechanics or carpenters worked either in El Alto or Rosas Pampa, and the drivers worked mostly in El Alto, but some worked in La Paz or other parts of the country.

We asked about family income, although I stressed to those conducting the survey that they should allow people to decline to answer this question (all questions, but this in particular). The response rate for this question was 61%. The majority of families earned less than 500Bs (US\$83) a month (65%), 27% earned 500-1000 Bs monthly, and 8%

earned over 1000Bs a month. Of those who specified, the average monthly income was 347Bs. However, it is possible that people underestimated their income slightly, stating only that income which they felt to be secure, for example.

5. Other details

Religion: 75% of the sample was Catholic, 23% Evangelicals and 2% other.

Use of public services in the zone: The following table summarises the numbers of households that used services in the zone:

Public Service	% of households that responded to the question who used the service (some used more than one)
Market	66
Football field	59
School: Unidad Educativa Bolivia	53
Health Centre	52
Church	28
School: Colegio Luterano	16
None	8

Civic activities in the zone: This question had a 94% response rate. About 77% of households participated in some civic activity: only 23% said that they did not participate in any. The following table provides a break down. It shows that there is a very high participation in civic organisations/activities in Rosas Pampa, although there is also the possibility that people might have exaggerated their participation a bit.

Activity	% who participate
General Assemblies of the <i>Junta Vecinal</i>	59
Meetings of Parents (<i>Junta Escolar</i>)	53
Street level organisation	30
'All three'	20
None	23

On the following page is an example of the questionnaire sheet used for this survey.

¹ The number varies from those who said they were housewives because some respondents have described housewives as not working.

ENCUESTA: GRUPO DE CATECHISTAS, CAPILLA DE ROSAS PAMPA

No. del Sector: ____

Persona Principal que vive en la casa: _____ Dueño/a de casa _____ Inquilino/a _____ Cuidando la casa _____ Otro _____

	Sexo	Edad (aprox.)	Trabajo	¿Es trabajo a cuenta propia, temporal o asalariado?	Donde trabaja: Rosas Pampa/ El Alto/ La Paz/ Otro	¿Cuántos años ha vivido en Rosas Pampa?	Donde nació: pueblo/ciudad, provincia y depto.	Qué idioma/s habla: C/A/Q/otro	¿Cuántas veces al año visita a su pueblo?	Notas/Otra información
Persona Principal										
Esposo/a										
Hijos										

- ¿Cuál es la religión de la gente en la casa? Católica: ¿cuántos? Evangélica: ¿cuántos? Otro No responde
- ¿Recurre a los servicios públicos de la zona? Colegio Bolivia Colegio Luterano Centro de Salud Iglesia Mercado Cancha No responde
Si no, porque? _____ No responde
- Cuando tiene un problema de salud (que no pueden curar en la casa), prefiere ir:
al Centro de Salud de Rosas Pampa al Centro de Salud de otra zona (¿cuál?) a la/ al curandera/o Otro No responde
- ¿En qué actividades de la zona participa Ud.? Organización de la calle Asambleas Generales de la Junta Vecinal Reuniones de padres de familia Nada Otro No responde
- ¿Cómo caracteriza la zona? _____
- ¿Cuál es su deseo para la zona? _____
- VOLUNTARIA:** Ingreso familiar básico: menos de 500 bs al mes entre 500 y 1000 bs al mes más de 1000 bs al mes No responde

APPENDIX II

Extract 1 (tobas.mov)

Students dancing Tobas in the Entrada Universitaria of July 2000, held in La Paz. The Tobas are an indigenous group from the tropical lowlands of Bolivia.

Extract 2 (tinkus.mov)

Students dancing *Tinkus* in the Entrada Universitaria. Tinkus is based on the famous tinku fights from Northern Potosí. The extract here shows women dancing a single special step.

(These two extracts are from a video I bought in the Ceja. No copyright information available.)

Extract 3 (kullawada1.mov)

The author (and partner) dancing *Kullawada* in the Rosas Pampa *Entrada* of September 2000. The *Entrada* began late, and we reached the *palco* in darkness. It is possible to hear some of the commentary (in Aymara). The dancers behind us move into a special step, on the signal of whistles.

Extract 4 (kullawada2.mov)

The *Kullawada* dance in the *Diana* of the Rosas Pampa fiesta. The dancers and the band are rather the worse for wear. At the end of the extract, there is a shot of the four *pasantes*, carrying their jugs of *trago*.

(These two are from a video shot by a vecino of Rosas Pampa; no copyright information available.)

Extract 5 (morenada_x.mov)

Excerpts from a video of the *Morenada comparsa* from the market of Eloy Salmón, dancing in the *Entrada* of Gran Poder, June 2000. The full *comparsa* probably took 12 minutes to pass in the already edited version of this video. Note the *matracas*, the men's costumes, the two bands, and the different styles of dancing by women. This *comparsa* had several different types of *chinas*.

(This extract is from "Senorial Entrada del Gran Poder 2000 Parte I y II/ La Paz, Bolivia" Romby Video-Mercury Audio Video)

Instructions for viewing videos

Open the file **videos.html** and follow the hyperlinks.

If the links to the videos do not work, and you wish to install video play-back software on your PC, then you can install QuickTime player by following the instructions on the CD (**qt.html**), or the website: <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>.

The video files are in the 'videos' folder on the CD.

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**THESIS
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