

# **The Politics of Pacha**

**The conflict of values in a  
Bolivian Aymara community**

Thesis presented for the degree of Docotor of Philosophy at the London School of  
Economics by A.L.E. Canessa

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## Abstract

This thesis deals with the differences of values between those held by people of the small Aymara village of Pocabaya and the modernising nation of Bolivia that encompasses them. Previous 'acculturation' studies have seen indigenous communities as almost powerless to resist the onslaught of Western values. As more and more Pocabayenos are exposed to the outside world they see ever more clearly how their language, values and customs are denigrated by the surrounding society. Nevertheless, the values of land and community have an over-riding importance and Pocabayenos critically examine the conflict of values and make efforts to make sense of this antinomy in a meaningful and personally relevant way.

A central aspect of this thesis is how in a number of situations Pocabayenos account for cultural differences in their own indigenous terms. In their cosmology we can see an articulation of this ethnic difference in a manner which includes an historical perspective. History and cosmology bring together a powerful metaphor for the illustration of ethnic relations in contemporary Bolivia. The dominant Hispanic culture is shown to be considered as contingent and the values it presents are incorporated into a coherent indigenous cosmological schema.

A central issue in the thesis is how Pocabayenos articulate historical changes within their own mythic explanatory schema. similarly, differences in gender ideology are seen to be critically incorporated into indigenous ideas about gender relations. Pocabayenos emerge as actively and critically engaged in providing meaning to the differences between themselves and the surrounding metropolitan culture.

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## Orthography

The orthography adopted in the text corresponds to the Alfabeto Unico (1983), the standard orthography for Aymara and Quechua. The Aymara plural for nouns is **-naka**. For ease of reading, however, I use the standard English plural.

The pronunciation of personal names in Aymara often varies dramatically from the orthodox Spanish version of the name and, as a result, on most occasions I spell names of people the way it would be spelt according to the Alfabeto Unico. When pronunciation is the same or almost the same as in Spanish, I have retained the Spanish spelling.

## Acknowledgements

Fieldwork was funded by a University of London Studentship and travel expenses were funded by the Central Research Fund of the University of London. Writing up was supported by grants from the Sutasoma Trust and the Malinowski Memorial Fund of the London School of Economics.

Fieldwork in Pocabaya would have been impossible without the hospitality and assistance of the entire village. In return I hope that I showed some Pocabayenos that their language and culture can be of interest and value to outsiders. Special thanks must go to the Patty Alanoca family for taking care of me and putting up with me with such patience and tolerance: Rimiji, Ankustina, Lusi, Yula, Rikardu, Wali, and Makariu. I would also like to mention my friends Pastuku and Jirman who made my stay in Pocabaya so much more pleasant than it would otherwise have been and Tiudusyu Mamani, the yatiri of Pocabaya, whose friendship as well as his knowledge of the ways of the achachilas were so important to this work.

In La Paz I would like to thank Diane Bellony and Ron Davis for suggesting a visit to Pocabaya, and to my friends Wolfgang Schüler, Gudrun Birk and Eva Dietz for their general support and helping me keep my sanity on many occasions. Justo Quelca Yapita was a great help in transcribing hours of taped interviews as well as providing valuable assistance with the translations.

I would like to thank those who have read and commented on chapters of the thesis: Francisca Cooper, Maurice Bloch, Maia Green, Peter Mason, David McKnight, Melanie Wright and the members of the LSE thesis writing group. Special thanks to Francisca Cooper whose clear mind and criticism contributed enormously to the coherence of this thesis. My supervisor Joanna Overing deserves thanks for her support and encouragement and I am also indebted to Jonathan Parry for his help and his illuminating and provocative criticism of the thesis. I would also like to mention Michael J. Sallnow who was a great source of support and inspiration during the initial stages of research. Finally I would like to thank Melanie Wright for her assistance with the charts as well as for her support and patience during the writing-up of this thesis.

## BOLIVIA

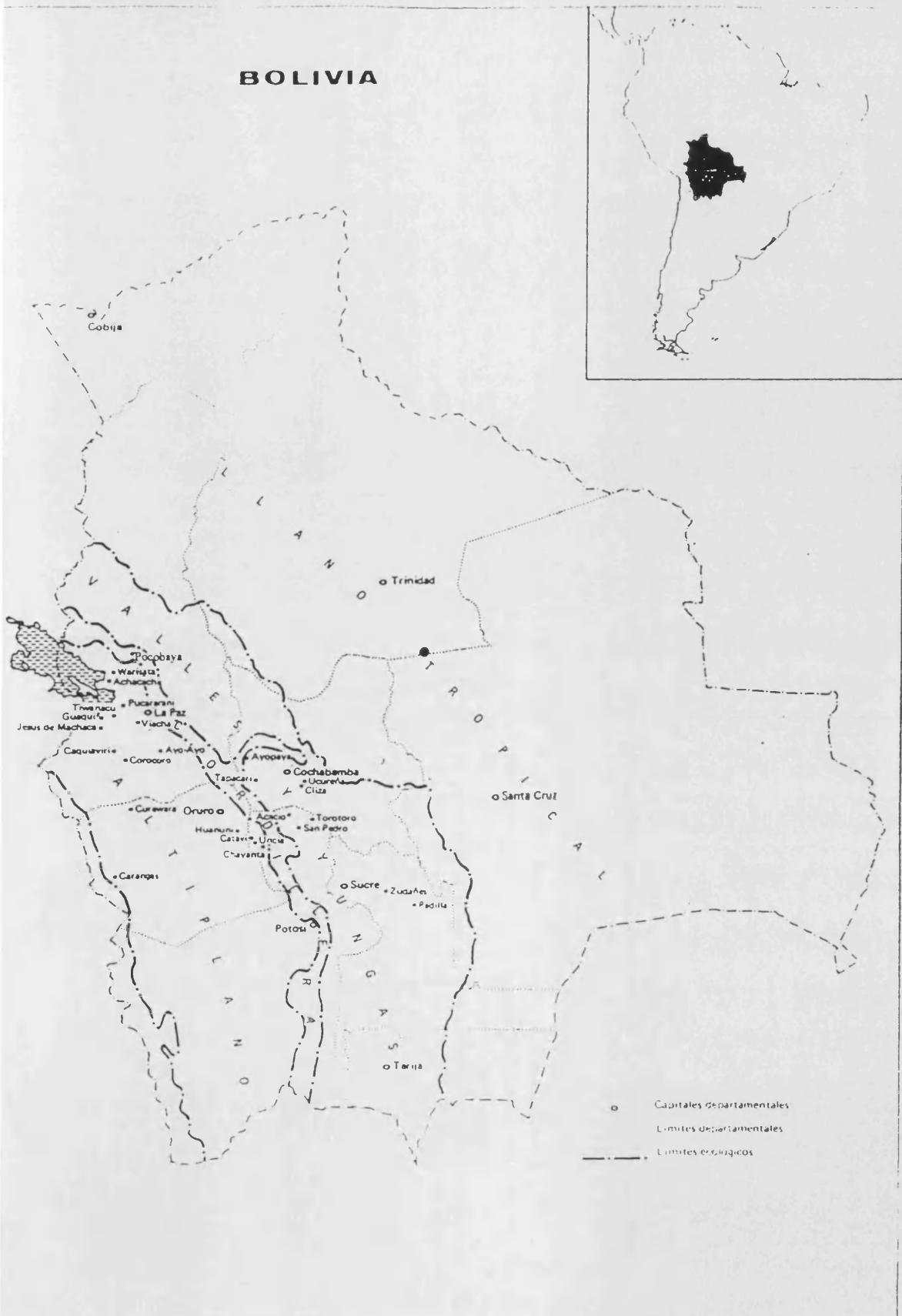


Figure 1: Bolivia (after Rivera 1987)

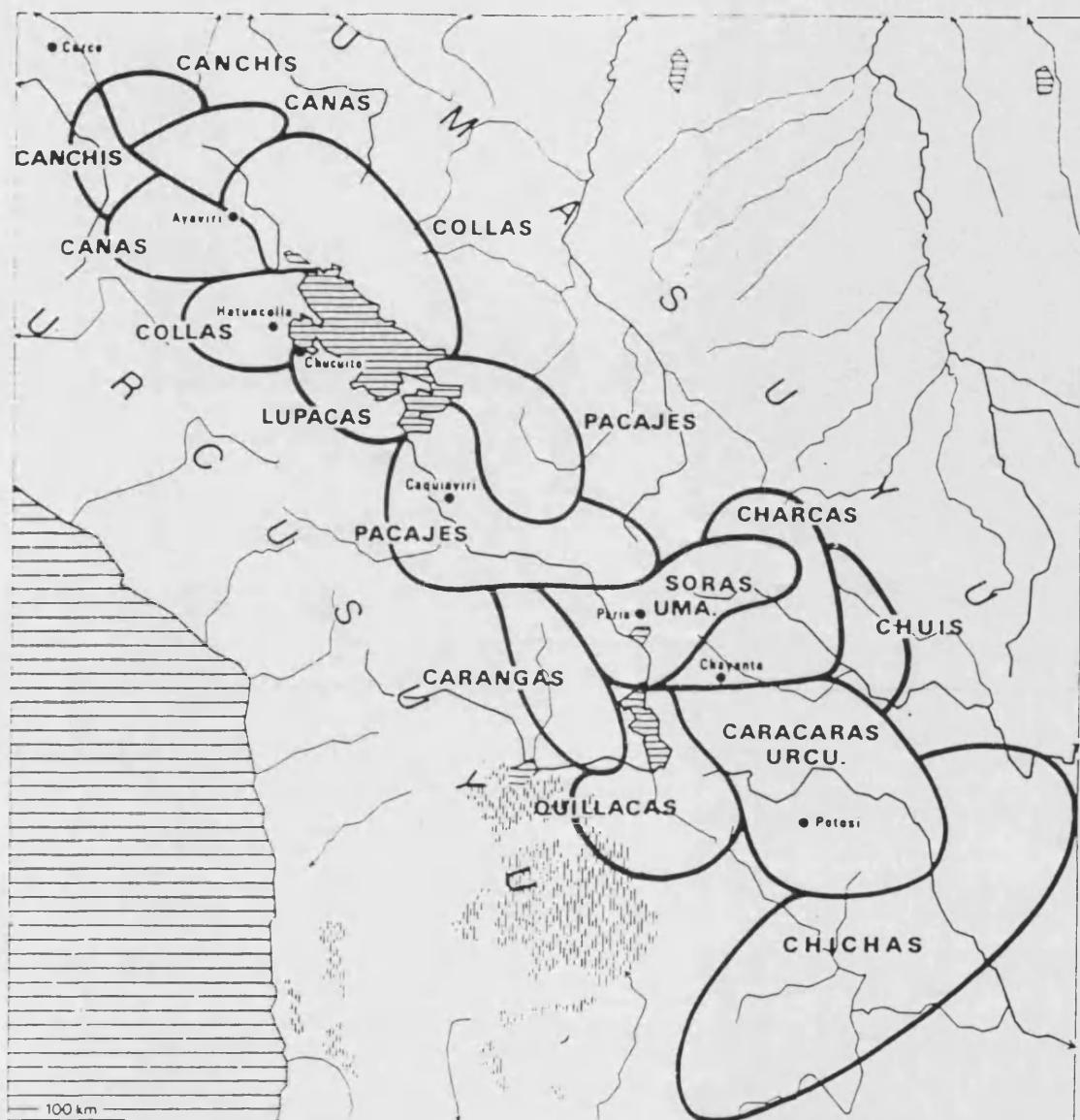


Figure 2: The Aymara Chiefdoms (*from Bouysse-Cassagne 1986*)

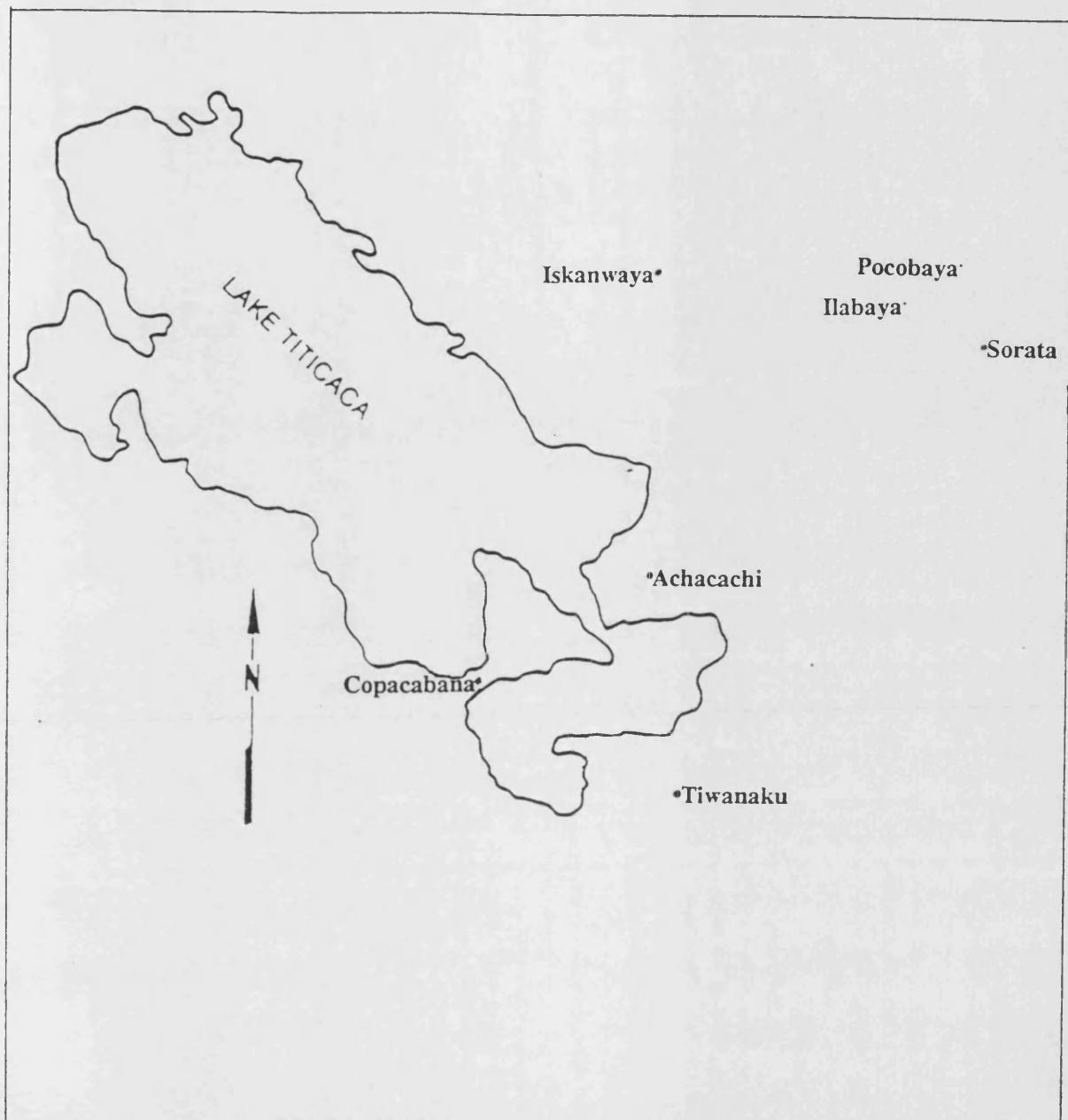


Figure 3: The Titicaca Basin (*not to scale*).

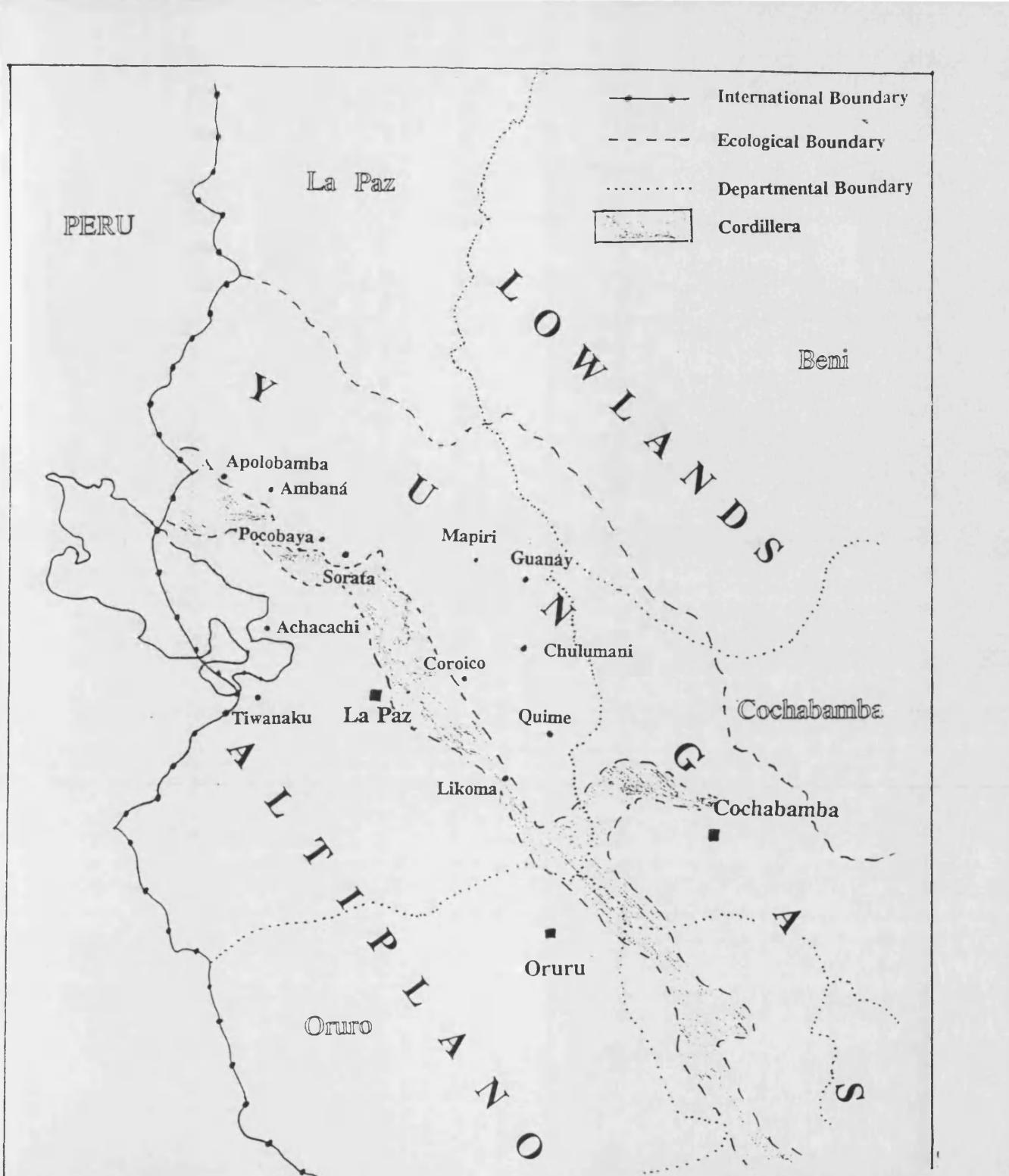


Figure 4: The Bolivian Yungas

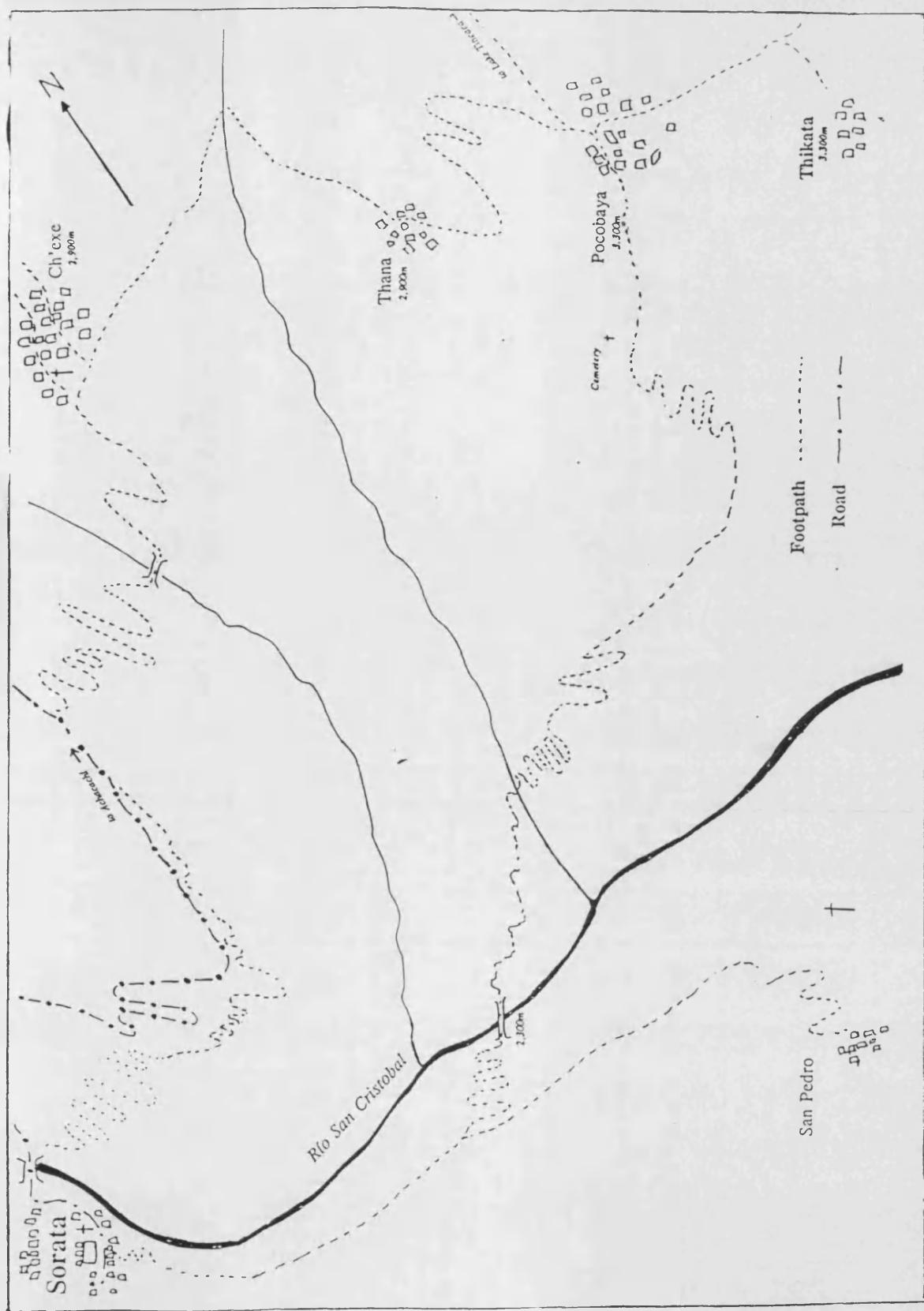


Figure 5: Local Map of Pocobaya and Neighbouring Villages  
(not to scale).

# Introduction

It was one of those damp Pocabaya mornings when the mist rises from the valleys and leaves the village shrouded in dense, damp fog. My **compadre** Rimiju walked into my room with a distinct look of disgruntlement on his face. "Pärinu," he said, "Life is not good in Pocabaya." As I watched the mist come in through the cracks in the door I was inclined to agree. It was, however, not the weather Rimiju was concerned about. "We will move to Sorata. It is more civilised there, more advanced. I will do up my brother's house and we will live well. I will make dolls. Your **comadre** will no longer speak Aymara. She understands Spanish and she will no longer speak Aymara. She speaks Spanish, you know. The children will only speak Spanish. They will dress [like the people of Sorata]. They are more advanced there."

I offered him a cup of coffee and we began to talk. The pressures from his fictive kin, his **compadres**, were getting too much. However much money he made from selling dolls he had to share it all. In Sorata, he would have no **compadres**. He would be able to save. He would become more civilised. But then we began talking about the land. He would have to come back and take care of it, plant, plough. He couldn't leave his land. Sorata was also expensive, everything costs money and people are not very nice there. The pros and cons were weighed up but he was determined to go.

Rimiju and his family have yet to leave the village and make the move to Sorata; whether they ever will I do not know. His dilemma, however, is typical of many Aymara Indians who live in the Andes when faced with a decreasing economic base in the countryside, forced to enter into wage labour, and seduced by the perceived wealth and sophistication in the towns and cities (*cf.* Collins 1988; Lewellen 1978). Such dilemmas occur the world over but it was not until later in my fieldwork that I began to appreciate the full implications such a change in lifestyle entails. It is not just a matter of moving house but severing the ties with kith and kin, the ancestral land and its attendant spirits, even changing one's nature as a human being. A whole range of factors beyond the economic are perforce brought into play.

The relationship between the values of the people of a small Andean village and the dominant encompassing metropolitan culture is the subject of this thesis. Hispanic culture is not simply dominant but aggressively so. Whenever Andean Indians confront members of the dominant culture they are constantly reminded of their inferiority in the eyes of mixed-race **mestizos** and whites. Nor can Indians choose not to leave their

villages as economic necessity increasingly forces men in particular to seek wage labour outside the village. The values of the dominant culture, moreover, are impressed on Andeans through compulsory attendance at school and army service.

In the army as at school they are truly confronted with the contempt of the dominant population groups for their language, their past, their skin colour, their customs, and their way of life. They are exhorted to turn from their way of life and to join 'modern society'....The world of the *indios* stands - as in the time of the Conquest - opposite the 'world of the whites' and once again not on an equal footing.

Pauwels 1983:361

At the centre of these issues is the very nature of cultural meaning. Can people genuinely inhabit with competence two drastically different cultural spaces or is one subsumed and made intelligible to the other?

Foucault (1974) asserts that the language of a given people at a given time posits a certain world view which informs all thought and from which it is difficult to break. It is in the very nature of cultural discourse to be coherent and exclusive. Cultural debates and alternative discourses are an illusion for both sides of the debate share certain assumptions to make the debate possible. At the root of cultural discourse is a system of analogies, comparisons and relationships that are repeated in a range of contexts: "if there is to be an articulated patterning of representations, there must be a murmur of analogies arising from these things, perceptible even in the most immediate experience: there must be resemblances that posit themselves from the very start" (Foucault 1974:119). Barthes (1972) sees culture as having these characteristics writ large. For him, any given symbol or symbolic act is understandable only with reference to all other expressions of symbolism in society. Thus on encountering a particular cultural phenomenon, one subconsciously contrasts and compares and eventually slots this phenomenon into an intelligible system of representation, what Barthes calls a cultural mythology.

The view of culture as a coherent system of related meanings faces a potential problem when dealing with a multilingual, multicultural society. Are cultural discourses maintained in a multicultural setting or do they lose their coherence? How are different values absorbed, accommodated or rejected?

The community of Pocabaya provides a convenient setting for a close examination of the issues raised here. As can be seen below, Aymara culture clearly consists of a

unified network of meaning with certain central metaphors recurring throughout various cultural phenomena. This system accounts for the differences between native culture and the encompassing hispanic culture in a meaningful and coherent way.

## The Aymara

Spoken in the high Andean plateau of Peru and Bolivia from Lake Titicaca to the Salt flats south of Lake Poopó, and in northern Chile, Aymara is the most widespread member of the Aru language family whose sole other remnants are the language spoken in Yauyos, department of Lima, Peru, and the nearly extinct Kawki. Aymara is most widely spoken on the central highland plateau (*altiplano*) of the Departments of La Paz and Oruro in Bolivia. The total number of Aymara speakers I approximate at between a 1.5 and 2 million.<sup>1</sup> Quechua, the imperial language of the Incas, is most widely spoken on the eastern slopes of the southern Andes in Bolivia and Peru.

In the Bolivian census of 1976 which registered 4.6 million people, 1.2 million people or 26% of the population stated they spoke Aymara, and of these, 315,000 were monolinguals (Albó 1980), a fall of over 300,000 since 1950 (Pauwels 1983:5). This compares with 3.3 million Spanish speakers of whom 1.6 million were now considered monolingual Spanish speakers (Albó *op.cit.*). Although monolingual Spanish-speakers are still very much in the minority, for the first time in Bolivian history there is actually a majority of the population that speaks Spanish. There has, however, been only a very small growth in the number of Spanish monolinguals between the two censuses and the growth in the number of bilinguals is evidence of the growth in the number of schools in rural areas (Klein 1992:265) as it is matched by a growth in the proportion of people in the population who are literate. Only 31% of the school-age population or above was

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<sup>1</sup> I arrive at this figure from a compilation of the Bolivian census of 1976 (Albó 1980) and the Peruvian census of 1972 (in Hardman *et. al.* 1988) which records 1.2 million and 332,000 speakers respectively. There are a few thousand speakers of Aymara in northern Chile for which there are no official figures as is the case for Argentina, including Buenos Aires, which has a small Aymara population. Given that the overwhelming majority of Aymara-speakers live in Bolivia and Peru and even allowing a considerable margin in case of an under count in these censuses as well as some consideration to the natural increase in population, it seems inconceivable to me that there can be as many as 3 million Aymara-speakers as stated in Hardman *et. al.* 1988:1.

considered literate in 1950 whereas in 1976 the figure had climbed to 67%, with over 80% of the children now listed as attending school (*ibid.*).

My, albeit anecdotal, experience in Bolivia suggests to me that the degree of bilingualism in Bolivia may be somewhat overstated. Many mother-tongue Aymara speakers who state their ability to speak Spanish frequently do so very poorly indeed and continue to speak Aymara with much greater fluency. Given the racial and cultural situation in Bolivia today, it is more likely that respondents to the census overstate their ability to speak Spanish and underestimate their Aymara than the other way around. Pauwels, for example, notes that 92% the people of Turco, a small town near the Chilean border, identified themselves as monolingual Spanish-speakers in 1976 whereas he observes that the clear majority speak Aymara as well (1983:336). He argues that this self-identification as Spanish-speakers and *mestizos*, mixed race, rather than Indian, is an expression of a fundamental break with the past and a clear and "definite choice for progress and development" (*ibid.*). We can nevertheless draw a clear picture of a country where the majority of the people are of Indian background and who are becoming increasingly familiar with the Hispanic culture that has dominated Bolivia for nearly five centuries.

The Aymara are principally small-scale agriculturalists inhabiting the highland regions of the southern Andes but it is very common for rural Aymara to herd llamas and alpacas as well as farm. In northern Bolivia and southern Peru, however, some Aymara live principally from herding alpacas and llamas (Hardman, Vásquez & Yapita 1988:2).

The term 'Aymara' covers a very large number of peoples of different ethnic origins. At the time of the Conquest, large proportions of the population of the *altiplano* spoke Uru and Pukina (cognate languages of Aymara) (Bouysse-Cassagne 1987) as well as Quechua, the Inca imperial language. The Spanish recognised Aymara as well as Quechua as a *lingua franca* (*lengua general*) and Aymara was used for proselytisation and administration throughout the southern Andes. As a consequence, there was serious interest in the nature and structure of the language the results of which have contributed much to our understanding of Aymara-speakers during the early colonial period.

As is well known, the Spanish found no written materials in the languages of the Inca Empire. In the 16th and early 17th centuries all works published in or on Aymara were written for the purpose of spreading the Christian faith by missionaries assisted by unnamed Aymara converts bilingual in Aymara and Spanish. Such works consisted of catechisms and other religious tracts, grammars, and dictionaries or 'vocabularies'. The

earliest published work to contain Aymara is the anonymous Doctrina Christiana, y Catequismo para la Instrucción de Los Indios published in Lima in 1584.

The first texts of Aymara to be published in phonetically reliable transcriptions are the folk tales recorded in Chucuito (Puno, Peru) by Harry Tschopik (1948) and the folk tales told by a speaker of the Pacasa dialect (north of Tiwanaku, Bolivia), as recorded by Weston La Barre (1950). Given with English translations, though without grammatical analysis, these texts are significant as the first published native free texts known to exist for Aymara. They are also important as a basis for comparison with present-day renditions of folk tales from the same and other Aymara-speaking areas.

The first attempts at complete grammars of Aymara were those of the Jesuit missionaries Ludovico Bertonio and Diego de Torres Rubio, both of whom worked on the Aymara of Juli in what is now the department of Puno, Peru. Bertonio was the more prolific, producing three grammars, a dictionary and several religious works. In 1603 two of his grammars appeared, Arte Breve de la Lengua Aymara and Arte y Gramatica muy Copiosa de la Lengua Aymara. In 1612 Bertonio published a dictionary, the Vocabulario de la Lengua Aymara, which has since appeared in several facsimile editions and is an important source of information of Aymara language and society during the first century after the Conquest.

Although distorted by their Latinate structure and unsystematic spelling, the Bertonio and Torres Rubio grammars provide a wealth of information on the Aymara of the period. Many suffixes attested are in general use today; others are found in only one or two present-day Aymara dialects, while still others are not attested in modern Aymara but are extant in other cognate languages (Briggs 1976). The grammars became models for later descriptions and laid the basis for Aymara usage that persists today among native speakers and others associated with missionaries. According to the linguist Juan de Dios Yapita, a native Aymara speaker, many Aymara terms and sentences given as examples in these missionary grammars are more or less awkward translations of Spanish rather than native words and expression (Yapita *pers. comm.*). This type of Aymara usage is sometimes referred to as 'Missionary Aymara' (*cf.* Briggs 1981b). A much more significant source of change in Aymara comes from radio Aymara, a language which has had to adapt to a very different context and is heard by large numbers of people in La Paz and in the **altiplano** area. Prominent among these in rural areas is Radio San Gabriel which is largely funded and administered by the Maryknoll order of priests. The kind of Aymara spoken on Radio San Gabriel is considered by people in the receiving

area to be 'pure' and 'legitimate', even though linguists have identified changes and distortions from traditional Aymara (*ibid.*). The importance of Radio San Gabriel and other stations in validating Aymara in the eyes of native speakers and providing them with a new expression of cultural identity and awareness can scarcely be overestimated.

After the mid 17th century the fervour of missionary zeal abated (cf. Chapter 5) and as a consequence the importance of Aymara as a language for proselytisation declined and the use of Aymara as a *lingua franca* in the Andes gradually gave way to Quechua. For the next hundred years little was published in Aymara except occasional sermons, few of which have survived. Despite having been written for hundreds of years, Aymara is not, in any real sense, a written language. Most Aymaras are illiterate and if they read at all, they read in Spanish. There are a number of Aymara-language newspapers published in La Paz but their readership is almost exclusively confined to La Paz Aymaraists and students of Aymara.

Over the centuries Pukina has disappeared altogether and Uru is spoken by a small number of isolated Chipayas living on the southern Bolivian altiplano. There are, nevertheless, communities on the altiplano who identify themselves as Uru even though they now speak Aymara. In turn, Quechua has replaced Aymara in many communities in the southern Bolivian Andes and continues to do so. One must be cautious then in speaking of 'the Aymara' since one can not assert a single ethnic history for all the speakers of the language. One can not speak uncritically of 'The Bolivian Aymara' when drawing on evidence from a single community (cf. Buechler and Buechler 1971). Some generalisations can, however, be made for Aymara culture and Andean culture in general and I have tried to make clear throughout this thesis when I am speaking about the field community specifically, the Aymaras, or Andean people.

The word Aymara has only in recent years been used as self-description. In southern Bolivia people still identify with their particular ethnic group. In the area around La Paz and lake Titicaca there is an increasing use of the word to describe all Aymara-speakers and an effort by some leaders to forge a collective identity. The focus on the archæological site of Tiwanaku as the centre of Aymara culture can be seen in this context of trying to create a coherent identity.

The people of Pocabaya will first and foremost identify themselves as Pocabayenos. Depending on the context, they will also identify themselves as **campesinos** (peasants), **indios** (Indians), Aymaras and occasionally as **Aymaristas** (Aymara-speakers). The greater frequency, in my experience, of the use of Aymara over

Aymarista (cf. Spedding 1989) is perhaps accounted for by the strong influence of Aymara radio in recent years and the sense of an Aymara identity this medium frequently conveys.

In Pocabaya two radically different cultures and languages have been in close interaction for almost 500 years. Pocabaya is in a strong Aymara-speaking area in the Atlantic watershed where there has been little anthropological work done as anthropologists have tended to concentrate on the Titicaca littoral<sup>2</sup>, the altiplano area near La Paz<sup>3</sup>, the Aymara areas of La Paz<sup>4</sup> or the Norte de Potosí<sup>5</sup>. Saignes (1985; 1986) has done some historical work on the valleys of Larecaja. The only contemporary anthropological study done in **yungas** is by Spedding (1989) although much of van den Berg's (1990) data was apparently collected there. Spedding's study, however, was undertaken in a coca-growing region where there has been much recent immigration. In the area of high **yungas**, between the coca-growing areas and the highland plateau, there has been no anthropological study. This is an area of long Aymara occupation but unique in that altitude is too low to herd llamas and alpacas which are so central to Aymara culture. This area of high **yungas** surrounding Pocabaya, although in relatively close proximity to the altiplano and Lake Titicaca, shows some very important linguistic and cultural differences to Aymara groups which have been most typically studied.

## The Conflict of Cultures

Andean peoples have lived encompassed by dominant Hispanic culture since the Conquest and it would be foolish to suppose that any kind of pristine Andean culture could possibly remain. What is not so clear in Andean studies is the degree to which native culture has been affected by these five centuries of occupation. In recent decades the penetration of the world economy into the Andean world has become increasingly more prominent and a number of writers, particularly in Peru where there is large-scale migration from the Andes to the coastal region, have been forced to recognise in one way

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<sup>2</sup> e.g. Buechler & Buechler 1970, Buechler 1981; Tschopik 1946, 1951; La Barre 1948

<sup>3</sup> e.g. Carter and Mamani 1982; Albó 1979.

<sup>4</sup> e.g. Albó, Greaves and Sandoval 1981, 1982, 1983; Johnsson 1986.

<sup>5</sup> e.g. Harris 1976, 1978; Platt 1986.

or another the profound effects such economic migration has on Andean communities (e.g. Collins 1988; Lewellen 1978; Allen 1988; Fioravanti-Molinié 1982). In Bolivia, Spedding (1989) illustrates how coca-growers are involved in the national economy and Allen (1988) is keenly aware of how international coca politics deeply affects the people of Sonqo in Peru.

The phenomenon of migration in the Bolivian Andes to the city of La Paz has been dealt with extensively by Albó, Greaves & Sandoval (1981, 1982, 1983, 1987) who give a clear picture of how Andean peasants adapt themselves to life in an Hispanic and urban world. They present rich data cataloguing the change of occupation, language, dress and cultural sensibilities that migrants undergo. That there is a fundamental dissonance in world view is assumed, but although they illustrate the tremendous pressures by and large brought to bear for the migrant to assimilate to urban *mestizo* culture, they pay much less attention to the actual conflict of values and conflict on the level of symbolic structures. Montes (1989) has begun a study of how Aymara values of male and female conflict with those of the dominant culture and how this antinomy causes stress and frequently violence within families in La Paz. Ströbele-Gregor (1989) has produced an impressive study on Seventh Day Adventists in La Paz, examining the motives and attractions of conversion. She makes the point that a partial acceptance of metropolitan values immediately places Indian migrants at the bottom of the economic and ideological heap. Some Indians are therefore impelled to a total acceptance of Western values, epitomised by evangelical Protestantism, to compensate for their unerasable Indian identity. There have, however, been no studies of how this conflict of values affects rural peoples. It seems insufficient to merely say that rural Andeans are increasingly subject to Hispanic and capitalist values without critically examining how these values operate on people, how they use them and how they choose to adopt some and not others. These are the central themes of chapter 4 in particular.

That there is a profound dissonance between the values of rural Andeans and Hispanic metropolitan culture has been widely noted (e.g. Hahn 1992; MacCormack 1991; Sallnow 1987; Harris 1987; Allen 1988; Wachtel 1977). At the centre of this cultural difference is the importance of complementary dualism as the organising principle of Andean thought and social structure (cf. Harris 1978, 1980; Isbell 1978; Fioravanti-Molinié 1982; Platt 1986; Schüler 1987; Sallnow 1987). When complementary dualism is applied to social relations one of its salient features is the

dyadic and symmetrical nature of relationships between people, groups and between people and the spirit world.

Linguists as well as anthropologists have also described how an Aymara's very identity is bound up in his/her relations with others (cf. Albó 1985) and founded on the sharing of one's precious asset, one's person in the form of labour in reciprocal exchange (Sallnow 1987:110). John Cole has investigated the primacy of the inclusive over exclusive in the Aymara world view, a primacy which Hardman (1972) noted is reflected in the Aymara person system. In his thesis, Cole characterises the Aymara concept of the soul as fundamentally mutual, that is, it is primarily defined in reference to other people, rather than to the individual *per se* and indicated that "the emphasis on mutuality as more fundamental than individuality forms a theme that runs through Aymara culture accounting for a number of otherwise inexplicable details of Aymara custom" (Cole 1969).

Harris (1987) also notes the dissonance of Aymara and Hispanic *Weltanschauung* and sees this in terms of the central metaphors of Aymara culture which are interrelated. These are those of time and space; past and present; high and low; victor and vanquished. That these are expressed linguistically is a focus of the work of Martha Hardman and her students, the implication of which is at the centre of this thesis which focuses not only upon the relationship between cosmology and religion but in relation to the way the Aymara construction of their world differs from the Hispanic one.

Native Andean people frequently account for the fundamental difference between themselves and urban-dwelling **mestizos** in terms of the asymmetry of the relationships **mestizos** typically have with each other and the asymmetry of the relationships between Indians and **mestizos**. "Reciprocity", Allen (1988:93) writes, "is like a pump at the heart of Andean life" (see also Sallnow 1987; Mannheim 1986; Mayer 1975 among others). Reciprocity is not only at the centre of social relations but people also enter into reciprocal relations with the spirit world, the chthonic beings which sustain existence (Harris 1982a; Nash 1979; Bastien 1978). Complementary reciprocity is the principle which guides all productive and moral relationships in Andean cultures. The clear exceptions are relations with non-Indians and relations with the Christian God who is not related to in the same way as Andeans relate to autochthonous deities. God's power as the presiding deity is recognised by Andeans but he is largely a remote and absent God (cf. Bouysse-Cassagne and Harris 1987) who rarely intervenes in the affairs of humans but to punish them (van den Berg 1991; Finch 1979; Ochoa 1978).

This relationship with the Christian God is thus an exception to the normal rules of social behaviour. The relationship of Christianity to Andean religion has been studied extensively<sup>6</sup>. There is, however, little agreement as to the relationship between the two. Some (*e.g.* Abercrombie 1986; van den Berg 1990) see a total fusion between the two in a new, coherent, system of beliefs. Others see Christianity and Andean religion as separate but complementary (*e.g.* Harvey 1987; Bastien 1978). Others still see the two systems as parallel but incommensurable: "Between them there is some interference, but no coherence" (Sallnow 1987:174).

For Pocabayenos Christianity and Andean religion differ profoundly for whereas the latter is replete with ritual and meaningful symbolism, the former is in fact largely devoid of symbolism, rather it is a system of emblems, arbitrarily signalling division and union, equality and rank but lacking intrinsic motivation. Christianity for them by and large represents social difference, cultural supremacy and political fact. In Pocabaya, Christianity is an external system accounting for the outside world and the relationship with that hostile outside world, as opposed to one that provides intimate meaning for daily life. In Tambiah's terms (1979:153), its meanings are indexical rather than symbolic. Christianity and Andean religion are not two systems of beliefs, two theories of the world, that compete equally in the minds of Andeans. The particular history of Christianity, that its spread was bound to the fact that it was primarily a mechanism of political and social control and integration, that it is intimately involved in the relationship between conqueror and conquered, that it is an emblem of Hispanic metropolitan culture, provides us with a possible avenue for solving the problems in understanding the play between cultures and values.

The argument of this thesis is that the values of metropolitan Bolivian culture and the people of Pocabaya are fundamentally incompatible. Where I depart from other writers is that I see a coherence within the discord. That is, Pocabayenos themselves recognise and account for the antinomy of values in their cosmology and its operations through history. Mythic history among the Aymara as the revolution of cosmological planes has recently been a subject of interest (see especially Bouysse-Cassagne & Harris 1987; Harris 1987, 1989). The association of different cosmological worlds, higher and

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<sup>6</sup> *e.g.* MacCormack 1991; Ströbele-Gregor 1989; van Kessel 1989; Dillon and Abercrombie 1988; Sallnow 1987; Bouysse-Cassagne and Harris 1987; Abercrombie 1986; McGourn 1977.

lower, and their attendant deities, with autochthonous and Hispanic culture provides a powerful metaphor for illustrating the relationship between the two cultures. It is in the particular nature of the relationship between the higher and lower worlds, the lack of mediation and fusion so typical of relationships between opposites in Andean culture that provides Pocabayenos with a powerful mode for understanding the relationship between autochthonous and metropolitan culture.

The mechanism of history, the **pachakuti** by which cosmological worlds replace each other, expresses an understanding of the very incompatibility between world views whilst accepting the dominance of contemporary Hispanic culture. This dominance, and the dominance of the Christian God is, however, historically contingent. Acceptance of Christianity must be seen in the light of accepting this turn of history; a political fact, rather than a theological one.

Aymara cosmology and historical understanding then allocate Hispanic culture a place within the autochthonous system allowing for a coherence of belief whilst simultaneously accounting for the very conflict and incompatibility the Hispanic sphere represents. It is above all in the belief in the **pachakuti**, the turn of the worlds, that the relationship between the two cultures is most clearly illustrated. By departing from the typical paradigms of relationship centred upon productive complementary opposition, Pocabayenos in their own terms can give expression to a relation that runs counter to their system of values. It is in the very breaking of the normal rules of relation that the relationship of cultures and values is made intelligible in terms of the autochthonous system.

We are left, then, with not a syncretism nor a confused complementarity but a coherent system which makes historical and political sense of the dominance of Christianity and Hispanic culture whilst maintaining at the same time an understanding of the inherent antinomy between the two world views.

## Entering the Field

After my first two months in La Paz devoted to immigration details and a few lessons in Aymara, I proceeded to search for a field site. Having established that I wanted to undertake fieldwork in a place that was in the high **yungas**, that is, between the deep tropical valleys and the highland plateau, I proceeded to explore the area around

Quime and Likoma towards the south of La Paz (see figure 4). After some weeks travelling and hiking through the area I saw some stunningly beautiful countryside but despite a couple of possibilities, did not find a place that seemed appropriate for what I had in mind, either because I could see no obvious way of settling in the village, because the villages were not exclusively Aymara-speaking or because they was much recent settlement.

After returning to La Paz, I planned another journey, one that would take me from Sorata north to Ambaná (see figure 4), a route that goes right through an area of high *yungas*. Friends in La Paz suggested I visit a village called Pocabaya on my way because of its view of the surrounding mountains. They had visited there once as they contract dolls from a number of villages in the area around Sorata. On my third day in the area I met someone going to Pocabaya and he agreed to take me. Travelling in the Andes, much as anywhere else, I suppose, one comes across villages and people which seem more or less friendly than others. The people of Pocabaya were certainly among the more friendly and after a night's sleep three men who subsequently became good friends offered to take me on a walk up into the mountains. From the mountain one has a tremendous view of the area. To the north one sees the dark mountains that reach to Peru, to the south and east the enormous Illampu massif towering up to 6,460m, and to the south is the deep valley and the San Cristobal River which runs swiftly into the *yungas* and, ultimately, the Amazon.

My journey would take me to the north and my friends were emphatic about the dangers that would surely befall me: the villages I would travel through were inhabited by evil people; I would be robbed, killed, maybe even eaten. I would surely not travel so far and so alone through the mountains. I was fairly determined to continue my journey and get a good knowledge of the area and find my field site before the rains set in. Also there was the desire to finish a journey once embarked upon. However, not only did I not reach Ambaná as planned, I never, in two and a half years in Bolivia, even saw it.

The following day there was a football match with the neighbouring village, and my friends, Pastuku, Irkulyanu and Ustakyu, were concerned that they were one man short... The fact that I had not played a football match since I was nine did not deter them in the slightest and I found myself at high noon the following day running back and forth in heavy hiking boots at over 3,000m in the burning Andean sun. We won. Both

matches in fact and, implausible as it may sound, my right boot connected with the ball and hurtled it into the goal.

That night I discussed my plans to learn Aymara and all agreed that the best place to do so would be in the countryside. A few beers later, the discussion moved to the possibility of moving into the room next to the school and a few beers after that it was settled. I stayed the rest of the week and after others had been consulted, the offer still stood. After collecting my belongings from La Paz I returned to take up residence in the room next to the school only to be offered the store of a house for 25Bs (£5) a month. I took up the offer and settled into learning a language that was proving to be a lot more difficult than I had ever anticipated.

After a few weeks, the owner of the house, Rimiju Patty, asked me to be godfather for his child's first hair-cutting. I agreed and thenceforth I became integrated, not only into the family, but into the community, as I was no longer the 'strange gringo' but Rimiju's **compadre**. The significance of this relationship was made clear to me by Rimiju: "Now people will not say bad things about you because you are my **compadre**." Unbeknownst to me at the time, there was much talk regarding my motives for being there and there was a small but strong group of people who feared I had come to steal their land. My formalised relationship with Rimiju put me in a much less threatening position and in time suspicion and hostility faded away. By the time I left several people encouraged me to marry and settle there and I received a number of offers to help me build a house and the land to build it on.

## Language, Informants and Archives

In the first months I worked hard at learning the language. I lived with Rimiju and his family the entire time I was in Pocabaya and joined them in their daily activities: hoeing, breaking the ground, weeding and my favourite, ploughing. Although I never used any of the members of my adopted family as informants as such, I learned much about life in Pocabaya from Rimiju and Ankustina as well as the older children, Lusi, Yula and Rikardu. The latter were particularly tolerant of my bungling ways and delighted in teaching me Aymara. As **compadre** to Rimiju and Ankustina, I also joined their network of relationships, siblings and fictive kin, and through these I found my social 'place' in Pocabaya.

I formed natural friendships with some people and others I found were quite interested to tell me about the things I wanted to know. This group consisted mostly of men, largely because of the fact that men were more likely than women to speak Spanish, and because of the simple fact that I was a man which made it consequently a little more difficult to approach women. With greater fluency and time I redressed the balance to a large degree. Much the same story can be told for my relationships with older people but when my Aymara was finally up to it, I had regular dawn conversations with Tiudusyu, the *yatiri*, ritual practitioner, of Pocabaya. Tiudusyu was glad to have the attention and the occasional gift and we developed a fine relationship. To him I owe a great debt for his patience and willingness to talk to me. I developed a profound respect and affection for Tiudusyu who was able to be dignified and serious without being aloof or ever lacking a sense of humour.

I visited La Paz regularly but usually for short periods and whilst recovering from typhoid I did much archival work in the Archivo de La Paz and the Kafkaesque Archivo de la Reforma Agraria, the Archive of the Agrarian Reform. I found much information about the canton of Ilabaya as well as about the regional capital, Sorata, during the colonial period in the Archivo de La Paz. The information I was able to gather from the Archivo de la Reforma Agraria was invaluable in giving me a picture of the twentieth century history of Pocabaya and specifically the background to the conflict with Thana (below). I was also able to collect detailed data on landholdings and use which I could compare with contemporary data I collected.

I did attempt to retrieve information from the archives in Sorata but these documents where piled up to the ceiling, covered in years' of dust, and in no order whatsoever. After several hours I realised my task was hopeless and abandoned it.

## Methodology

Most of the data collected was through participant observation. I conducted several taped interviews with some key informants but these were the very few who did not mind being taped and formally interviewed. Tiudusyu, the *yatiri* was particularly open to being interviewed. Interviews conducted in Aymara were transcribed with the assistance of Justo Mamani Yapita in La Paz who also provided some assistance with the

translation of the interviews with Tiudusyu the *yatiri*. The rest of the data were collected on a more or less informal basis.

Data was collected in Pocabaya between January 1990 and March 1992. Other data, such as several interviews with the priests, were collected in Sorata during the same period. Yet other data were collected on brief trips through the highland plateau, the *altiplano*, and the lower valleys, the *yungas*. Specifically these places were Achacachi (Omasuyos), Suri (Inquisivi) and the mining area of Tipuani (Larecaja). I also collected data in the neighbouring villages of Pocabaya: Khacha, Thikata, Thana and Ch'exe. All the data that appear in the text are taken from Pocabaya unless specifically stated although the data collected from the above-mentioned areas were very useful for ethnographic comparison.

Chapter 1 deals with the historical, socio-geographic and political background to Pocabaya. Chapter 2 introduces us to the life of a Pocabayeno and illustrates how the individual's consciousness is embedded in his/her social and communal relations. Chapter 3 examines the stress and tensions between the community ideal and its component parts, households and individuals. Chapter 4 deals with gender relations and how Hispanic values play on indigenous concepts of gender equality. Chapter 5 takes us into the realm of the Catholic Church and issues of "syncretism". The relation of the Catholic Church to Aymaras is approached historically and I suggest that the relationship between Church and community has changed little in 500 years and that the distance of the official organs of the Church has enabled Pocabayenos to develop their own interpretations of Christian doctrines. Finally in Chapter 6 we see how the antinomy of Hispanic and indigenous values illustrated throughout the thesis is expressed in Aymara cosmology as recounted to me in Pocabaya. It is here we see how boundaries are finally constructed and how Aymara cosmology and history can incorporate Hispanic culture within the framework of indigenous categories as an historically contingent event.

Central to the thesis is the argument that reciprocity and exchange are at the root of Andean mores. This mode of relationship characterises all social relationships including those with the supernatural. These principles of reciprocity and exchange are fundamentally different to the social relations of the dominant national culture. This contradiction between the two is expressed in terms of cosmology where the upper sphere (representing Hispanic values) and the lower sphere (representing autochthonous values) do not relate to each other according to the typical models of exchange and mediation that

appear throughout every aspect of Andean life. This contradiction I take as illustrative of the implicit recognition of the opposition between the Hispanic values of the metropolitan culture and Aymara values as they are conceived in Pocabaya.

# Chapter I

## Pocobaya in Space and Time

Pocobaya is a small village in the eastern Andes of Bolivia at an altitude of 3,300m with a population of about 220 people who together farm 720 hectares. The temperature is enviably temperate as the altitude allows Pocobaya to avoid the bitter cold of the **altiplano** as well as the stifling heat of the lower valleys. The village sits opposite the Illampu massif which totally dominates the view to the east. To the west and south are the deep and warm valleys of the **yungas** (Quechua:valleys) and the ancient routes to the mines. As the crow flies, it is 60km north of La Paz and about 25 km east of Lake Titicaca.

The people of Pocobaya place themselves in their world according to history and geography, and along ethnic and racial lines. The way they locate themselves tells us much about their relationships with each other, with other peoples, with the supernatural and with the metropolitan culture of Bolivia. By drawing these perspectives we will see a clear picture of the background to cultural challenge that confronts Pocobaya and so many other small Andean communities, that of negotiating fruitful relationship with the outside dominant culture within a framework that is meaningful in terms of autochthonous categories and precepts.

Much of what Pocobaya is today is owed to the historical relations between conqueror and conquered, and this history is powerfully echoed in the present-day relations between Hispanics and Indians. We will see how relations with other Aymaras are characterised by the kind of non-monetary, symmetrical exchange involved and the historical relationship that has survived between the two communities. Symmetrical exchange is the basis of all productive relationships for Pocobayenos and defines their relationship with each other and the community as well as with the tutelary supernatural spirits, the **achachilas** and the **Pachamama**. Relations with the local mixed-race or white population of the nearby town of Sorata, however, are characterised by mistrust and asymmetry.

# Sociogeography

There are basically two ways out of Pocabaya. The first is the route to and from Sorata and La Paz, which takes one to the centre of metropolitan Bolivian society. The second takes one to the heart of Aymara culture, the area around Lake Titicaca. These two routes form a pair of geographical and cultural axes that define Pocabaya with respect to the world.

## To Sorata and beyond

There are no roads to Pocabaya. A path descends 900m to the San Cristobal River whence another path leads to the provincial capital, Sorata. Sorata, the main regional trading centre, is a picturesque town of about 2,000 permanent residents and is inhabited by traders (who are mostly women) and the families of miners. There are daily buses from Sorata to the national capital, La Paz, which can be reached in three and a half hours in the dry season. Sorata is on a major route into the lower valleys where many of the gold mines are located. There are two pre-Columbian paved roads into the jungle and on to the gold mines: one is totally overgrown and the other is used much more rarely than in the past since a road suitable for trucks was opened up in the late sixties.

Sorata is the first step any Pocabayeno would take into the Spanish-speaking world of modern Bolivia. Sorata, despite its overwhelmingly Indian population, is largely run by a handful of whites and mixed race *mestizos* who are culturally oriented to the urban values of Hispanic La Paz. In the past, and until the Agrarian Reform, Sorata was the centre for the White landowning class of the area and was a very wealthy and prosperous town. There was a large German colony and the landowners became very wealthy on the production of cinchona used to make quinine for the treatment of malaria. The cinchona trade was administered in Sorata which, in those days, was the gateway to one of the few routes between the highland and the lowlands of that part of the Andes. During the rubber boom, demand for quinine in the malaria-ridden rubber-producing areas was very high and great fortunes were made in Sorata. The decline began with the end of the rubber boom and the opening of a new road to the gold mining areas which took a more direct route from La Paz and by-passed Sorata. This also coincided with the opening of a Customs office in La Paz which meant that all goods had to pass through

La Paz instead of directly to the Peruvian coast, thus raising overheads. It was the 1952 revolution, however, which occasioned the departure of most of the non-Indian community and now only a few embittered epigones remain. In this, Sorata is very different from other rural towns such as Ilabaya which were largely depopulated and left half-deserted after the Agrarian Reform<sup>1</sup>. The cantonal capital, Ilabaya, is at least as old as Sorata and boasts an impressive colonial church. Apart from *fiesta* days, Ilabaya gives the impression of being a ghost town. Sorata, in contrast, always has a certain amount of visible activity even when there is no market.

The old local white ex-haciendado class which mostly resides in La Paz, maintains strong links with each other and with Sorata. They meet regularly in La Paz, for example holding their own fashion shows, and still consider themselves Sorateños even though the younger generation was not even born there. They are the *vecindad* or *vecinos* (lit. neighbours) a term which denotes the white and, by implication, legitimate, members of a rural town.<sup>2</sup> It was often commented to me by those few whites left in Sorata that the town was depopulated and only a few families remained. They were referring to those few white families.

In Sorata there is a large colonial church administered by two priests and there are also a few Spanish and Chilean nuns who run a school. Additionally, there is a police station and the administrative headquarters for the entire province which reaches well into the jungle regions and the gold mines further down the eastern slopes of the Andes.

These aspects of Sorata rarely touch on the lives of most Pocabayenos. I did not find one policeman or official who had even heard of Pocabaya. In fact, the only townspeople who had heard of the village were a couple of traders who dealt with Pocabayenos; they did not, however, know in which direction the village was, even though, as the crow flies, Pocabaya is only four miles from Sorata.

Pocabayenos do not have very much to do with the church and the priests. A priest is supposed to visit once a year but in fact Pocabaya is lucky to receive a visit once every two years. Pocabayenos will occasionally pay for a mass to be said for the dead

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<sup>1</sup> See Crandon Malamud (1991) for a very similar situation in the neighbouring altiplano region.

<sup>2</sup> In contrast, the term *vecino* in southern Peru denotes, not whites, but mixed-race mestizos (eg. Sallnow 1987, Allen 1988). In the area around Sorata, however, *vecino* clearly denotes putatively 'pure' whites.

and will sometimes pay for a christening. Other than these occasions, Pocabayenos have no contact with the Church at all.

The area of Sorata life which does touch on Pocabayenos is the market. Pocabayenos produce most of their food such as tubers and maize themselves and it is tubers and maize that constitute by far the main part of the daily diet. Meat, in the form of beef, mutton or poultry, is also produced in Pocabaya. For extras such as coffee, sugar, noodles and rice, it is essential to travel to Sorata. These goods are all to a greater or lesser extent luxury items and the degree to which Pocabayenos consume these goods varies considerably according to the financial resources of the particular family.

The Sunday market is visited regularly by Pocabayenos (mostly the men) who will come down the mountain to buy the foodstuffs unavailable in the village. The women of Pocabaya do not generally come unless their husbands are absent, in which case they will accompany someone else to Sorata to buy the things they need. Although Aymara women are involved in local and regional markets all over highland Bolivia and the Andes, the women of Pocabaya and neighbouring villages do not engage in market trade if they can avoid it. In this they are similar to the women of Sonqo near Cuzco in Peru studied by Allen where the women rarely venture out from the village (Allen 1988:81-2). In so far as women engage in trade at all, it is the exchange of products (*trueque*) such as maize for potatoes with other communities rather than market trade which involves money.

In recent years Sorata has become increasingly well-known to tourists who are attracted by the beautiful surrounding scenery, the opportunity for treks. Climbers who aspire to ascend the summit of Illampu or Ancohuma also frequently use Sorata as a base. This sudden increase in tourism in Sorata (and Bolivia in general) is partly attributable to the fact that large areas of Peru which traditionally attracted many more tourists than Bolivia are suffering a sharp decline in the tourist industry due to the violence between Maoist guerillas (Sendero Luminoso) and the Peruvian army. Their impact on the local economy is small and there is rarely more than a handful of tourists in Sorata at any one time. Most Sorateños and Pocabayenos have no occasion to interact with these tourists (who, if they speak Spanish are very unlikely to speak Aymara), but are very aware of their presence. Pocabayenos are sometimes puzzled or even angry, however, at some tourists' appearance. The dishevelled look and torn clothes worn by people who are manifestly wealthy are seen as an obscene affectation of poverty by some Pocabayenos. If they were not rich, it was argued to me, they could hardly afford to travel to

Bolivia.

It is extremely rare for anyone to travel alone from Pocabaya to Sorata. This is partly due to the fear of travelling alone, especially because of the malevolent spirits of the river which must be crossed by a small wooden bridge over the gorge. But even in Sorata it is rare to see a Pocabayeno alone and it is more generally the case that they conduct their business in a small group.

Sorateños are known as **q'ara**, a word which literally means bare or without skin (cf. van den Berg 1990; Isbell 1978:67). **Q'aras** are those who have shed their culture and, metaphorically, their skins. It is used not only for those whites and **mestizos** who live in Sorata but those Aymaras who have chosen to adopt the ways of the **mestizo** community. It is very common for such people to refuse to speak Aymara, to change their names and deny their cultural background altogether. There are external social forces to be sure and these shall be treated more fully below, but the simple act of leaving the land and the productive intercourse with it is sufficient to leave the migrant with a great degree of insecurity. One ex-Pocabayeno and a wealthy Sorateño who was successful in the mines would occasionally become very drunk and make his way to Pocabaya where he would stay for a few days. He would cry and apologise to all for his behaviour, for abandoning the community, for abandoning the **pacha**, the land. After a few days work in the fields, shedding his boots for sandals so he could feel the earth, he would return to his interests in Sorata or La Paz or his mine until his next visit.

The area of Sorata and the province of Larecaja has for centuries been the route to the gold areas of the eastern Andes. To this day there are two pre-Incaic roads that lead to the gold mines. Gold is once again the source of wealth in the area and many successful miners have built new brick houses and drive pick-up trucks into town. Other Sorata residents have become successful small businessmen and women servicing the entire area as well as the traffic to the mines. Sorata, then can be seen as route into successful **mestizo** culture and even a move into Sorata signifies quite clearly aspirations to enter into that culture and to 'cholofy'.<sup>3</sup>

To make this move of 'cholification' (Bourriau 1967) is a dramatic one for Pocabayenos. It may be a permanent move to Sorata, or to the mining areas, or to the

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<sup>3</sup> The word 'cholo' has quite a pejorative sense in normal Bolivian speech but several writers use it in the more technical (and original) sense of an Indian who has adopted the metropolitan culture (cf. Albó 1983:11).

colonies in the yungas, valleys; but it is a rare case for someone to decide to make this move permanently and the immigrants generally insist that they have left the village with the intention of eventually returning (cf. Albó *et. al* 1983).

From Pocabaya going in the direction of Sorata one travels 900m down a small path to footbridge that crosses the gorge. From the bridge which consists of three poles across the gorge, one follows a path along the river to Sorata. Every part of the way, every outcrop of rock, every stream, every crag, every plateau virtually every twist and turn is named. These names are said have been given by the ancestors (**achachilas**) and many of the meanings have been lost. The importance of these names in themselves is paramount to the Pocabayenos. It is a way of not only laying claim to the land of their ancestors, but also to kinaesthetically move through the space and time marked by the **achachilas**<sup>4</sup> (see Sallnow 1987:184). One can not divorce the relationship of people with the land and with each other. It is this common relationship with the land that defines the community: "social relations become spatial relations, conceptualised through an energised landscape finely contoured in accordance with gross physical topography" (Sallnow 1987:97). This relationship with the land and its spiritual representations, the **Pachamama** and the **achachilas** not only defines the community, but defines humanity. To be human (**jaqi**), quite simply is to engage in a productive, reciprocal and communal relationship with the land (cf. Bastien 1978; Allen: 1988). The relationship of Pocabayenos with their land is part of a cosmic exchange that sustains existence. This is why a permanent move to Sorata or anywhere else beyond is not simply an act of geographical translocation; it is a rejection of the land of the **achachilas**, of the essential exchange relationship with the **Pachamama** and a rejection of the self. Such a step necessarily entails a rejection of culture and identity.

It has been argued that inhabitants of Andean towns are possessed of a dual identity" (Harvey 1987:264) and are capable of simultaneously holding an autochthonous worldview as well as one of the Hispanic state for a contextualised positive construction of themselves in the world. Other writers have noted a similar phenomenon for migrants to Andean cities such as La Paz (Albó *et.al* 1983) and Quito (Salomon 1981). In monolingual villages such as Pocabaya which is much more socially and culturally homogeneous than towns and cities in the Andes, people do not have the same kind of

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<sup>4</sup> **Achachilas** are tutelary mountain spirits as well as the ancestors who legitimate the occupation of the land by their descendants.

access to the cultural accoutrements of the dominant society to make such a dual access possible.

Nor is it the case that the difference between Pocabayenos and Sorateños can simply reduced to class as Poole asserts for the peasants of Chumbivilcas who "do not see the gamonal [feudal boss] or misti [mestizo] as in any substantive way different, that is in ethnic or much less racial terms. Rather the peasant sees the **gamonoal** for what he is: an historically privileged class enemy" (1987:388). In contrast, Pocabayenos do see the difference between those like themselves who have an intimate relationship with the land and those who live in Sorata and live from commerce or administration as fundamental as well as frequently along racial lines. To reduce this difference to class of peasant, campesino, versus non-peasant is to reduce a cultural chasm to economics (Mannheim 1991:20).

The social and ethnic continuity some writers describe for the Andes is perhaps much more evident in Sorata which is largely bilingual and includes recent migrants from villages as well as descendants of German colonists. A clear illustration of the differences Pocabayenos and their neighbours perceive between themselves and outsiders is clearly illustrated to the contiguous village of Khacha. Khacha is a small agricultural village a few hundred metres below Pocabaya in the direction of the river. Pocabayenos refer to the people of Khacha as **q'ara** and the people of Khacha refer to themselves as **vecinos**, the same word used to describe Sorateños. The reason given is that Khacheños are considered to be white: fair-haired and green-eyed. Indeed many did conform to this stereotype. Moreover, whilst all Khacheños speak fluent Aymara, the language they speak principally among themselves is Spanish. They are **campesinos**, peasants, in the literate sense of the word but Khacheños as much as Pocabayenos insisted that they were not, in fact **campesinos**.

Unlike other Andeans, such as those of Chumbivilcas (above), Pocabayenos do see the difference between themselves and others in explicitly racial terms. In fact, racial difference was given as an explanation to me for the backwardness and poverty of Aymara peasants. As proof of this assertion I was told that Blacks are even darker than Aymara Indians and consequently poorer and more stupid. White people such as **gringos** are similarly perceived to be clever and more able; **mestizos**, in between, and so on.

## Towards Lake Titicaca

The other route out of Pocabaya goes north and east towards Lake Titicaca which can be reached in as little as three hours by a man with a light pack walking along a quick route without a donkey or mule. This area around the Lake, the high plateau known as the **altiplano**, is the Aymara heartland. The longer route which can be travelled by pack animals takes, on average, two hours more. Both paths cross a mountain pass which is at approximately 4,500m above sea level and end at the shores of Lake Titicaca at 3,900m a.s.l. a few miles north of the regional centre of Achacachi and where there are a number of fishing villages. At this pass is an **apachita**, a cairn, dedicated to the **achachila**, the tutelary spirit, of the mountain. As one passes, a stone is added to the cairn, a libation is poured and, despite the cold and unprotected position of the **apachita**, a small meal of potatoes, maize and pancake is eaten. This maize pancake (**kaswira**) is typically used for communal ritual meals (**wayq'asi**). After giving appropriate attention to the **achachila**, one enters the area of the **altiplano**.

Pocabayenos regularly travel this route to exchange maize for fish and traditional goods such as alpaca-woven cloths and llama fat which are used for rituals. Villagers along the route will also trade potatoes for maize and wheat since these lands are above the altitude limit for maize. In August, when the wheat is harvested, groups from this area will travel to Pocabaya to exchange their woven cloths, **inkuñas** and **taris**, as well as musical instruments for wheat. Smaller groups come regularly throughout the year with fish to exchange for maize.

The exchange of products such as woven cloths and llama fat are very important because they are essential for offering to the **achachilas** and the **Pachamama**, the spirit of the earth. For the **yatiri** (seer) to read one's coca leaves, a personal woven cloth (**inkuña**) is essential. The person seeking assistance, be it divinatory or supplicatory, will offer the **inkuña** to the **yatiri** who will ask the supplicant to breathe on it and, placing it on his/her head will ask the **achachilas** to help him/her through the coca leaves now imbued with the spirit of the supplicant. Allen (1988:133 *ff.* and *passim*) notes that in ritual divination in Sonqo (in the area of Cuzco in Peru) it is the animating essence of the coca leaves that travels to the spirits and returns or through which the spirits communicate directly. Divination as explained to me by the **yatiri** of Pocabaya is different in that it is the spirit of the person seeking the divination that temporarily inhabits the coca leaves. I was told that an **inkuña** could only be made of alpaca wool

as the **achachilas** would accept nothing less. The importance of alpaca wool for an efficacious **inkuña** is also noted by Allen (*ibid.*).

Pocabayenos will generally trade with specific communities. These communities are connected with Pocabaya through tradition or distant kinship links. There are relationships between communities as well as relationships between households that endure over time.<sup>5</sup>

Although products can be paid for in cash, it is typically the case that they are exchanged for products that are otherwise unavailable in the particular region. Even in the small markets on the shores of the lake traders often prefer to exchange their goods for other products rather than cash. On some occasions, people may refuse to accept cash altogether.

The relationship with the people of the **altiplano** then, goes beyond the economic and in fact has existed for several centuries. Murra (1975) has clearly outlined the importance of the interdependence of the ecological zones within the ethnic groups. Although the Larecaja **ayllu** of which Pocabaya was once a part (Saignes 1985) is now long defunct and there are no longer 'archipelagos' (Murra *op. cit.*) of kin groups in different ecological niches, the ancient system of exchange continues to the mutual benefit of all. The fish from the Lake Titicaca is an important source of protein for Pocabayenos as is the wheat and maize for the diet of the lake dwellers. These exchange relationships are of a very different order from those with the people of Sorata; more so because of the religious nature of some of the commodities involved.

The religious connection with the people of the **altiplano** goes beyond that of simply the exchange of products. The Pocabayenos have an origin myth by which they are all descended of three families who came from the **altiplano**.<sup>6</sup> It is difficult to ascertain to what degree, if at all, this is true. As we shall see in greater detail below, the Spanish came into the area and established haciendas and communities soon after the conquest and although migration from the highlands did continue, it appears to have been exclusively to established communities. If the story of the three immigrants from the

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<sup>5</sup> For more information on the relationships between highland and lowlands in the Andes, see Custred (1974); Murra (1975); Favre (1977); Orlove (1977); Harris (1978, 1982b); Fioravanti-Molinié (1982).

<sup>6</sup> Allen gives another example of a founding myth whereby the community is founded by three ancestors. It is unclear, however, as to how general a phenomenon this might be (Allen 1988:99-100).

**altiplano** is true, it would almost certainly have had to have occurred before the Spanish Conquest and possibly even before the Inca invasion.

The important point, however, is that Pocabayenos believe their origins to be in the **altiplano**. The people of the **altiplano** are considered to speak a more legitimate Aymara (despite the fact that the younger generation of **altiplano** Aymaras speak a Spanish/Aymara patois) and are generally considered to be more traditional even though, once again, this is not borne out by the facts. There is, for example, a great deal of evangelism in the Aymara area around the lake and in La Paz which has been on-going since the 1920s (cf. Ströbele-Gregor 1989). Evangelical Protestantism in Bolivia is fundamentally anti-traditionalist and although it is a force in Sorata and in one neighbouring village, Ch'ixi, it doesn't figure at all for the rest of the area.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the high mountainous area between Pocabaya and the **altiplano** proper is culturally very conservative and even in the large town of Achacachi close to the shores of lake Titicaca, one can find dozens of ritual specialists who cater for the needs of the surrounding villages (and even for those supposedly converted to evangelical Protestantism). Pocabayenos furthermore lament the fact that their lands are just too low to have llamas and alpacas which are central to traditional Aymara culture as generally conceived.

## The lower valleys: Yungas

At 3,300m, Pocabaya is on the border between the highlands and lowlands and this zone of transition, the **taypi**, was particularly important in terms of the vertical archipelago (Saignes 1985:100). The lands of Pocabaya go from 2,500m to approximately 4,200m. This spread of land allows them to grow maize and wheat in the lower altitudes and potatoes and other tubers in the higher altitudes as well as grains such as barley and oats. As there is not enough of the higher land to keep llamas, the principle livestock is sheep along with a few goats and some cattle.

Pocabayenos have exploited this ecological diversity for hundreds of years. On August 19, 1618, "the principals and leaders of the **yungas ayllus** Pcovayas Thahuana

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<sup>7</sup> There was, a few years back, a family that converted to evangelical Protestantism but life was made so difficult for them that they were basically forced to leave Pocabaya. There have been no evangelical Protestants in Pocabaya since, despite the occasional errant proselytiser who arrives from the **altiplano**.

[i.e. Pocabaya and Thana]," of Hilabaya [Ilabaya], had cause to defend their land from the avaricious eye of a resident of La Paz and described their lands thus:

These are lands for our natural sustenance, where we plant potatoes and ocas and other vegetables like quinoa, to support and maintain us, and...it is natural and right, since we plant maize to pay the rates and tributes; and in sterile years we make up a good bit of the rates with the chuñu [freeze-dries potatoes] we harvest from said lands.<sup>8</sup>

From this record we can see that the pattern of land-use in Pocabaya has remained fairly constant for several centuries.

The true *yungas*, the deep wet valleys, are quite different from the Pocabaya area. Beyond is the steamy jungle feared for its strange beasts and diseases. The peoples of this piedmontane jungle region are known by the Pocabayenos as *Millas* although it is not known if they are in fact descendants of the ancient *Mollos* known to archaeologists (see below). That there was a relationship with the people of the deeper valleys is attested by the various dances that require feathers from jungle birds. The meaning of these dances is apparently lost and their names provide no obvious clues but informants do say, for example, that they are parrots of the jungle when they dance with parrot feathers. This apparent ignorance of meaning of these dances is in contrast to other dances such as the *qawrani* potato harvest dance. Here pelican (*pariwana*) feathers are used because "the *Pachamama* likes it" and because the light pink colouring is similar to the colour of the blossoms of the potato plant. Other dances have similar, if sometimes incomplete, explanations so the lack of explanation for these dances with beautiful feathers is rather striking. Research from other areas reveals that highland peoples have a particularly symbolic relationship with the 'wild' peoples of the lowlands and this may be the case here (*cf.* Sallnow 1987). It is possible that the dances are an inheritance from the indigenous peoples that inhabited the area before incursions from the highlands. Unfortunately there is not sufficient information to go beyond conjecture.

The *yungas*, apart from being the site of the gold mines, is also an area of migration for Aymaras. Due to the over-use of land in the traditional Aymara areas along with increased population and a series of droughts, many Aymaras have taken to

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<sup>8</sup> *Petición de los principales yungas de Hilabaya*, Sorata, September 19. 1618, in Archivo Nacional de Bolivia, Sucre, quoted in Saignes (1986:313).

colonising the warm valleys. The government helps these settlers with land grants and many communities have moved en masse from the *altiplano*.

Many Pocabayenos have relatives who have settled in the *yungas*, generally as fruit farmers. In 1990 there was a bad drought in Bolivia and there was much talk of colonising one of these areas. Despite the hardships and the uncertain future only one head of household decided to take steps in the direction of colonisation and he divides his time between his lands in the *yungas* and Pocabaya. Despite the constant speculation about migration, almost everyone felt that s/he would not leave Pocabaya until they absolutely had to, that it would be better to stay even if things would be harder.

Nevertheless some do leave and these tend to be sons or young couples who are basically forced out because of the lack of land. They generally return for the *fiestas* laden with sacks of welcome fruit. Other Pocabayenos will spend two or three months of the year working on the larger farms, particularly in the rice fields of Caranavi where they are paid in kind as well as with a daily wage.

### The mines

There are varying degrees of migration which allow people to convince themselves that they will always return to Pocabaya (*cf.* Albó, Greaves and Sandoval 1983). Most adult men engage in labour in the gold mines or the rice fields of the *yungas* for determined periods. Some do this for a couple of months a year, others spend most of the year in such wage labour. Others, especially those who enter into a partnership and get a stake in the mines, rarely return to Pocabaya at all.

Most of the mines in the areas of Guanay, Mapiri and Tipuani where Pocabayenos typically go are owned by cooperatives. That is, a group of men register a stake to a particular area and proceed to mine there in the hope of striking gold. When things become more established, they take on casual labour. The ways this casual labour is paid varies somewhat. They may get paid a basic wage plus the rights to pan the slag or they may work a certain number of shifts for the owners and then one shift for themselves. In any case, a lot of gold is illicitly smuggled out of the mine and a miner can be lucky enough to extract the equivalent of £50 of gold for himself in a single day. On the other hand, there may be days and weeks when little gold is found.

Pocabayenos like going to the mines despite the hard work. Most mines are poorly mechanised, if at all, and the basic labour is still that of a man with a hammer and pike and dynamite. The mine shafts are frequently just large enough for a man to crawl

through and are often flooded with water; moreover, there is no ventilation other than the shaft opening and breathing becomes very difficult, even for those acclimatised to the rarefied atmosphere of the Andes. The miners go in for an eight hour shift with a large bolus of coca which helps not only with the labour but also the lack of oxygen. They will labour for hours in cramped conditions as they chisel away the rock around them. Along with other known perils of the mines, the guardian of the mine (the *Tiu*) occasionally demands a human life (although not as many as silicosis). Despite such hardships, Pocabayenos frequently recount how much they enjoy life in the mines.

The first and obvious attraction is the fact that they can become rich. Everyone knows someone who has become wealthy in the mines. One Pocabayeno at least made it to the point of owning a pick-up truck, a house near the mine as well as one in both Sorata and La Paz (and is in the process of building a bigger one just off Sorata's plaza). Pocabayenos are perfectly aware that the world runs on money, and they can not only quote you the exact price of gold in US dollars but the dollar/peso boliviano exchange rate with considerable accuracy.

When the mine they are working in is producing well, miners are flush with the excitement of the earth regurgitating its riches into their arms. They will speak enthusiastically about the heady excitement of boom times: the money, the booze, the feeling of success. Their pride is clearly evident when they return to Pocabaya laden with radio cassette recorders and other goods of the modern world. They may also have enough money to sponsor the village fiesta in September.<sup>9</sup>

The money is frequently spread out in a variety of ways, notably by satisfying demands of **compadres** (ritual kin) and relatives for 'loans'. Despite the fact that there are differences of wealth, obvious accumulation is clearly frowned upon. I was told on more than one occasion that the reason people spread out their money and sponsored fiestas was to avoid **envidia** (Sp. envy). Envidia is sufficient motive for someone to be bewitched and is taken very seriously.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> One Pocabayeno who had worked for many years as a baker in a mine ruefully commented to me how most of the money he had saved went into sponsoring the fiesta.

<sup>10</sup> I was told that I would be safe enough in Pocabaya but that as I travelled through the surrounding area and into the mountains I should beware of, not robbers, but people who would bewitch me out of **envidia** and leave me with a mysterious and incurable disease.

# History

## Pre-conquest history

Archaeological and other documentary evidence clearly indicates that the province of Larecaja, where Pocabaya is situated, was very heavily populated when the Spanish arrived and had been so for at least five hundred years previously when the area was part of the Mollo civilisation. In fact, everything leads to suggest that the area was more heavily populated than it is today. A few hundred metres up the mountain from Pocabaya are the clear remains of a village, possibly Mollo, with extant terraces and plaza which suggests that the area has been inhabited and cultivated for a thousand years at the very least and quite possibly longer.

The history of the Larecaja area goes back beyond the Incas to the period of the Tiwanaku civilisation. The Tiwanaku civilisation reached its peak in the eighth and nine centuries and was centred around the present-day village of Tiwanaku thirty miles south of Lake Titicaca. Although Tiwanaku was an advanced agricultural settlement from approximately the first century onwards it was not until the fifth century that its influence began to expand beyond the immediate region of the southern shore of Lake Titicaca. At its height, it reached well into what is now Peru and Chile. The Empire, if that is the correct term, is seen by some to have been conquered pacifically and based more on commerce and religion than force of arms (Klein 1992:14). Others however disagree and the latest evidence suggests that Tiwanaku was, in fact, an empire founded on military conquest (*cf.* Wright, Hastorf & Lennstrom *in press*). Recent archaeological work in the vicinity of Tiwanaku has revealed that its economic base was founded on an extremely efficient agricultural system based on a series of canals and raised fields which, in reconstruction, have been shown to produce ten times more potatoes per hectare than traditional methods. The water in the canals also acts as insulation against frost which can occur at any time of the year on the altiplano (Kolata 1989).

It is unclear which language or languages were spoken by the inhabitants of Tiwanaku (as many as three have been suggested) but there is a consensus among archaeologists, partly based on toponymic evidence, that Aymara was at least one of the languages spoken. In contemporary Bolivia, Tiwanaku is a focus of Aymara identity and nationalism and in recent decades there have been growing numbers of people attending

the winter solstice rites among the ruins. It was also the site of the 'Tiwanaku Manifesto' in 1973 which attempted to give coherence to the indigenist **katarismo** movement (Albó 1987:396).<sup>11</sup> In 1991 the President declared Tiwanaku the 'diplomatic capital of Bolivia' and has used the site as a setting for a number of political speeches and events.

The Mollo culture, centred in what is now the province of Larecaja, appears to have existed contemporaneously with Tiwanaku for several centuries at a comparable, but less complex, level of development. The archaeological site of Iskanwaya, not far from Pocobaya, has produced ample evidence of the sophistication of this ancient civilisation especially in the production of ceramics. The Mollo culture became a more integral part of the Tiwanaku civilisation in the latter's expansive period between the eighth and eleventh centuries (otherwise known as Tiwanaku V). Mollo pottery was influenced by Tiwanaku through the ages and during the period of the Tiwanaku V much pottery in the Tiwanaku style and of Tiwanaku origin appears. Tiwanaku-style pottery has been found dating several centuries after the fall of Tiwanaku proper in the twelfth century. The current theory is that the centre of Tiwanaku collapsed due to a prolonged (sixty years) drought which made the hydraulically-based agricultural system untenable. The population appears to have moved itself into the surrounding hills and to the periphery of the Empire as well as to satellite cultures (Kolata 1986; Albarracín Jordan and Mathews 1990).

To this day there are dozens of Mollo sites in the Pocobaya area and peasants are constantly coming across various types of ceramics, particularly ossuaries, in fields and other areas. In the valleys around Pocobaya there are several Mollo forts all within sight of each other surrounded by terraced fields.

The demise of the Mollo culture proper is difficult to date but by the time of the Inca expansion in the century preceding the Conquest there was a coherent polity of Aymara-speaking kingdoms. The Collas 'kingdom' was one of the largest of these Aymara kingdoms and included the area around what is present-day Pocobaya (cf. Bouysse-Cassagne 1987:211ff.). It is unclear as to whether the Mollo culture existed contemporaneously with or was actually a part of the Colla kingdoms. These kingdoms were divided into moieties each with its separate "king" and each controlling different territories. Linguistic and geographic evidence suggests that the Urcusuyu (upper) division of any nation was primarily concentrated in the mountaintop fortified centres to

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<sup>11</sup> See also chapter 6 and conclusion.

the west and southwest of Lake Titicaca, with their colonies grouped along the Pacific coast, whilst the Umasuyu (lower) division of any nation were in the eastern highlands and had most of their colonies in the eastern associated valleys (Klein 1992:14) (see Figure 2).

These moieties, in turn, were composed of **ayllus**, kin groupings with each **ayllu** divided into an upper (**hanansaya**) half and a lower (**urinsaya**) half. **Ayllus** also had colonists working and living in different ecological zones. "Called **mitimaq**, these highland colonists were the vital link binding the inter-regional and multi-ecological economy that was so crucial in maintaining the core highland populations" (*ibid*:17). To this day certain ethnic groups, **ayllus**, of the southern region of Norte de Potosí such as the Macha, Laymi and Quillaca still maintain access to lowland areas for similar ends and in a similar manner.

The relationship of the people of this piedmontane area and the highlands around Lake Titicaca appears to have been long and vital. The evidence of maize in Tiwanaku (Wright, Hastorf & Lennstrom in press) and Tiwanaku pottery and textiles in the valleys of Larecaja suggests a trading relationship between these two areas. Whether or not this relationship continued after the demise of Tiwanaku in the eleventh Century is apparently difficult to ascertain but it is very clear that the Incas understood the importance of the valleys, **yungas**, for the highland areas.

From the lowlands, maize, vital for making ritually important **k'usa**, maize beer, as well as fruit was exchanged for wool, meat and various tubers. The **yungas** also produced species of tuber that could not be grown in the highlands. Thus the Incas intensified the system of relations between colonies along a "vertical archipelago" to exploit the different ecological pistes (Murra 1975) a relationship, however, that has existed since before Tiwanaku times. The Incas sent colonists (**mitimaes**) to the **yungas** to ensure their control of the lowland areas. The colonists were also agents for political control especially after the Aymara rebellions against Inca rule in the 1470s (Klein 1992:19-20). The history of Larecaja is such that the **ayllu** organisation collapsed and there is no longer the direct territorial link with the **altiplano** as before. It is not entirely the case, however, that "Nowadays, the inhabitants of both zones, those who visit the markets and country fairs to exchange products, have lost even the memory of a kinship and common origin" (Saignes 1985:96). As we shall see below, although Pocabayenos are no longer part of a domain that includes areas of the highlands, they are very much aware of their cultural links with the peoples of the highlands and even their common

origins.

This relationship appears to have been more pronounced in the first centuries of the Colonial period. Saignes quotes two people from the early Colonial period, in 1647 and 1594, who speak of the relationship with the highlanders. The first is a leader from the highlands and the second a valley- dweller who respectively stress their relationship with the other region:

It is true that the population of this province of Larecaja, since the time of the Inca, always was and has been with those said mitimaes Indians because it is proven that there were no Indians that one could describe as being native of this land and in the case that they in fact were, they could only have been few in number.

We are mitimaes located here by the grandfathers and great-grandfathers of the last Incas generation after generation and born and raised in those said valleys among those indigenous peoples of the yungas.<sup>12</sup>

(Saignes 1985:97)

Although Pocabayenos do not recall the colonisation of the area in terms of Incas and mitimaes, they do tell of the village being founded by three men and their families many years ago. These men are said to come from Umasuyu. Omasuyos (pronounced Umasuyu in Aymara) presently denotes a province near Lake Titicaca but historically referred to a much larger area and basically encompassed the area around the lake and up to the cordillera (Albó 1979:7-8)<sup>13</sup>. It is thus impossible to determine whether the term refers to modern Omasuyos or pre-Colonial Umasuyu. My archival research, however, has revealed that Pocabaya existed from the earliest colonial times (the late

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<sup>12</sup> [E]s cierto que la población de esta provincia del Arecaxa desde el tiempo del Ynga siempre fue y a sido con dhos yndios mitimaes porque berificado no se hallaron yndios que se pueda dezir naturales desta tierra y caso negado que aia algunos han de ser muy pocos en numero y naturaleça.

[S]omos mitimaes puestos por los abuelos y bisabuelos de los yngas ultimos y de generacion en generacion y naciendo y criando en dhos valles calientes entre los yungas naturales dellos.

<sup>13</sup> **Uma.suyu:** **Uma** means water and **suyu**, territory. So **Umasuyo** refers to the territory of the water or lake. In Quchua, however, **uma**, means 'head' and not water.

The historical Omasuyos included the capital of the Tiwanaku civilisation although, as a polity, it came into being after the fall of Tiwanaku.

sixteenth century) and one could tentatively conclude that the accounts refer to a pre-Colonial relationship.<sup>14</sup>

## Colonial Period

It took several years after the conquest of Peru for the Spanish to bring their attention to bear upon what they would call Alto (Upper) Peru, or Charcas. In 1538 Francisco Pizarro entered the highland area south of Lake Titicaca to pacify an attack of Incas and Lupacas against the Collas who had supported the Spanish during the conquest of Peru (Klein 1992:34). It was this division between Aymara groups that enabled first the Incas and then the Spanish to conquer the Aymara area.

Whatever the relationship with the people of the deeper valleys during the Inca period, it is quite clear that those people who lived in what is now Pocabaya had a close association with the people of the highlands before the Spanish arrived and for many centuries previously. With the arrival of the Spanish this unity between highland and lowland was broken as the territory was divided into **corregimientos**, administrative units based on towns populated by Spanish landowners, and surrounded by **encomiendas** created from grants given by the Crown. It was common for the Crown to grant conquistadores the right to Indian labour and the produce of their land (but not necessarily title to the land itself). This was known as the **encomienda** system and the owners of these **encomiendas** were known as **encomenderos**. The **encomendero** was also required to pay for the religious education of the Indians and otherwise acculturate the Indians to Spanish norms (Klein 1992:37).

The **corregimiento** of Larecaja with Sorata as its capital was founded in 1590. This administrative creation effected a bureaucratic separation of the Sorata area and the Omasuyos region with which it had been culturally and economically linked for centuries. The expropriation of lands had a more grievous effect on links between these areas because the Aymara corporate groups (**ayllus**) no longer had lands in both ecological zones.

The Indian communities that were not entirely co-opted into haciendas were

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<sup>14</sup>There is a possibility, albeit remote, that Pocabaya was re-colonised in modern times from peasants from Omasuyos as at least one of the **haciendados** to own Pocabaya when it was an hacienda owned land in both these areas.

legally recognised as independent indigenous communities. During the colonial period the Crown raised taxes from these independent communities headed by often corrupt **curacas**, leaders, who would take their portion of the Crown's taxes and become very wealthy. The Crown had an interest in keeping the independent communities viable, as they were a source of labour for the mine in Potosí (the **mita**). On several occasions officials would come from the La Paz or even the colonial capital, Lima (often referred to in the texts as the City of the Kings), to redress the grievances of Indians whose lands had been stolen. These visits or **visitas** as they were known were intended as a sort of survey to calculate the taxes due to the crown and the supply of labour, the **mita**, to the mines of Potosí. It is interesting to note that the **visitas** of 1575 and 1583<sup>15</sup> reveal that native colonists from highland regions, the **mitimaes**, living in the Larecaja valleys outnumbered those designated as 'natives' (**naturales**), that is, the original residents, by a factor of two to one.

As hacienda Indians were exempt from the **mita** and the most burdensome taxes, it was thus one of the objects of these **visitas** to restore land to the communities which had their land illegally annexed by greedy landowners and thus ensure the continuance of the payment of taxes and the **mita**. These **visitas** then had a mitigating effect on the expropriation of Indian lands.

Titles to lands were, however, constantly ignored and the Crown was forced to arrange for an extensive **visita** to the area by Don Geronimo Luis de Cabrera in the years 1656-1658.<sup>16</sup> The fact that a **visita** had to be repeated on various occasions, indicates that the local Spaniards were progressively annexing the Indians' lands to their own and largely ignoring the Crown's prerogatives. A **visita** by Don Geronimo Luis de Cabrera in 1658, for example, had to be repeated as little as two years later because of the abuses that had occurred in the intervening time.

In his **visita** of 1660, Don Juan de Segura Danalo de Ayala, Canon of the Holy Cathedral Church of the city of La Paz and Titular Commissary of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, states that he has come to address this problem of land rights and to restore from the

...individual caciques and Indians the fields, lands and estates which the General Don Geronimo Luis de Cabrera restored to their

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<sup>15</sup> Archivo de La Paz ALP.

<sup>16</sup> Visita de Geronimo Luis de Cabrera, Archivo de La Paz, 1656-8.

common good as much to Spaniards as to other mixtures and Indians of different provinces taken this good which has been granted to the same naturales and mitimaes of said town [Ilabaya]<sup>17</sup> thus making flee those present as well as those absent destituting them from their land grant something that must be remedied and solicited by all means according to His Majesty served by order in my keeping and of his women, children and relatives and that the Royal taxes and tributes may not lapse.<sup>18</sup>

(Archivo de La Paz: ALP/GLC I 1660 c.1 - D.19)

This is a very clear and frank indication of the interest the Crown had in maintaining the viability of independent communities. With the overthrow of Spanish dominion in 1825, however, it was no longer interests of the new ruling classes to retain independent indigenous communities. In fact, as the government changed from one of Spanish officials to one of a land-owning oligarchy, the attitude of the ruling elite towards Indian land changed accordingly. The Indians had no one to mediate in disputes between themselves and rapacious neighbouring landowners for the latter were now the ruling class in Bolivia.

## The Hacienda Period

With the advent of the Republican period in 1826, the Indians had no one to whom they could address their grievances and thus the process of expropriation of their land accelerated during the nineteenth century and in fact continued, slowly but inexorably, into this century with the whittling away of lands of the last remaining independent community in the canton of Ilabaya, Ch'ixi.<sup>19</sup> The worst part of this period was during the final decades of the nineteenth century. Corruption and despotism

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<sup>17</sup> The capital of the canton Ilabaya which includes Pocobaya.

<sup>18</sup> ...caquíes e yndios particulares las chacras tierras y estanças que el general Don Geronimo Luis decabrerá les restituyo a su comun a si a españoles como otras misturas e yndios de diferentes provincias quitando este bien que se les a hecho a los mismos naturales y mitimaes de dicho pueblo asi los presentes ahuyentandolos como a lo de ausentes destituyandolos de una rreducción cosa de que tanto se deve rremediar y solisitar por todos medios segun su magestad se sirve mandarlo en orden a mi conservacion y de sus mugeres hijos y familias y que no descaescan las Reales tasas y tributos.

<sup>19</sup> According to the Lista de Contribuyentes of 1832, there were still by that date six independent communities in the canton of Ilabaya (to which Pocobaya pertains) and 17 registered haciendas. See Albó 1979 for an account of the parallel process in the neighbouring area of Omasuyos. Some landowners had land in both areas.

reached new heights under the administration of President Melgarejo (1855-1871) who declared all Indian communities extinct and sold off many of their lands to the highest bidder (Alexander 1982:49).

The small and closely-knit political class constituted a land-owning oligarchy which exercised a dominance over their subject peasants that was thoroughly feudal.

The owner of an hacienda exercises over the Indian an all-encompassing authority. The authority he enjoyed was close to that of a Mediaeval lord in that, like the lord, he maintains a private army, assumes and exercises the *jus prima noctis*, and governs with absolute power over all his dependants.

(Condarco Morales 1983:31)

This oligarchy, which conceived of itself in caste terms, was quite clear in its view that to preserve its position and privileges, it was necessary to maintain the Indians in a position of inferiority and subjugation. Indians were divided and isolated from the outside world to instill in them a feeling of inferiority (Pearse 1975:124). To this end, **haciendados** exploited situations where land was disputed between two free communities or between an hacienda and a community. There are several documented cases of **haciendados** exploiting and inflaming these situations for their own ends (Albó 1979:23ff). The Pocabaya case of the conflict with the neighbouring community of Thana is a contemporary example of this historical practice.

In the nineteenth century the Indian's land situation worsened<sup>20</sup>. The expropriation of land and treatment of Indians was rationalised in terms of progress, modernism and a philosophy of social Darwinism: the dominant social class had a right and even a duty to subjugate and ultimately eliminate subordinate classes in the name of progress. It was a common lament in the last century (as it is today) that Bolivia is backward because of the large number of Indians and that, as a consequence, Indians hamper the economic and social progress of the country.

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<sup>20</sup> At Independence in 1826, less than a 30% of the rural population of Bolivia lived in **haciendas**, the others living in free communities. Klein (1992:161) calculates (based on the statistics of Dalence 1846) that by 1846, 51% of the rural population lived in free communities and that there were 5,000 haciendas and 4,000 free communities. The expropriation of land reached a peak in the 1880s and continued into this century until but a handful of free communities remained generally with considerably less land than they had in colonial times.

Moreover, a Social Darwinist theory was and is used to account for the incompetence and corruption in government since it relied on a large number of mixed-race **mestizo** functionaries. The pernicious consequences of miscegenation are imaginatively described by the nineteenth century poet Gabriel René Moreno:

The tendency of **mestizos** towards laziness, contentiousness, servility, intrigue, those seeds of scandalousness and 'caudillaje', is notorious; to this we can add the stupidity and cowardice of the Incaic Indian all which combine to perpetuate the despotism of our society.

(Quoted in Demelas 1981:62)

Thus the ruling classes neatly projected upon the Indians their own incapacities and inability to create a civilised and functioning society. All this rhetoric was accompanied by 'scientific' evidence that the Indians were congenitally stupid, had smaller brains, were predisposed to indolence and treachery and so on, marshalled to 'prove' that the Indians were quite inimical to the development of a civilised society (Demelas 1981). Not only was the subjugation of the Indians desirable and even moral, but so was the theft of land, for only the white creoles could ever efficiently exploit the land. The total disregard for the Indians' welfare or rights is illustrated by the actions of Liberal President General Ismael Montes (1903-09 and 1913-17). Whilst touring the region around Lake Titicaca he came upon a surviving free community. Much impressed with the richness of the area that the community occupied, he promptly established his ownership of the land, ordered that all the members of the Aymara community be moved to La Paz, and forbade, under pain of death, any of them to return to their land. Indians from elsewhere were brought in to work the land for General Montes and it remained a large estate until the Agrarian Reform of 1953 (Alexander 1982:52).

The prevailing attitudes of the day are neatly expressed by Saavedra:

As Le Bon says, if an inferior race is placed next to a superior one it must disappear, and if...we must exploit those Aymara and Quechua Indians for our benefit or eliminate them because they constitute an obstacle to our progress, then let us do so frankly and energetically.

(Saavedra 1955:146)

Bautista Saavedra was none other than the President of Bolivia in the nineteen twenties. He was also a young lawyer who was the principle defence in the famous Trial of Mohoza where 228 Aymaras were accused of murder in the context of the uprising of

1898. His main line of defence was that the hatred by Indians for whites was inextinguishable and will erupt at the first possible moment. Saavedra attempted to show that the type of the 'primitive savage' continues to exist among the Aymaras and makes them born criminals, blood-thirsty and predisposed to violence. That they rose to oppose the arbitrary theft of their land never seemed to have been considered (Ströbele-Gregor 1989:52).

## The Thana Conflict

The lands that now constitute Pocabaya were expropriated from Indians by the late Colonial period and was thenceforth known as the hacienda of Thana and Pocabaya. Colonial records note that these were *ayllus* before being converted into haciendas. This long hacienda history does not mean, however, that Pocabaya was spared the violence of the Republican period as the case of the conflict with Thana illustrates.

The hacienda of Thana and Pocabaya was split into two in 1897. This split was later to have disastrous consequences as the land pertaining to each was apparently not clearly defined.

The owner of the hacienda of Thana was Salomón Monterrey. He bought the neighbouring hacienda of Pocabaya with his brother-in-law Eulogio Franco who, despite his vast landholdings in the provinces of Larecaja and Omasuyos, appears to have been particularly aggressive towards landowners for he was involved in at least two disputes against the haciendas of Qullpani and Walata Grande, both a few hours walk from Pocabaya (Albó 1979:26 ff.).

Salomón Monterrey died some years after the purchase of Pocabaya in the Chaco War (1932-36). In 1937 Franco took over both haciendas (then valued at 60,000 pesos). He, however, produced a document dated 1929 showing the sale of the other half of the property to him whilst the eldest of the Monterrey children (and only male) was absent in the United States. The sisters were either not aware of the situation or not willing or able to act until their elder brother's return. On Mario's return he contested this document, and apparently won but it took him until 1944 to do so. The children of Monterrey, Mario, Aida, Adalid and Olga, protested that Eulogio Franco "inspired by God knows what deviousness, got a judge from Achacachi, who is now dust in the cemetery, against all reason and justice, to arrive at a judgement against us; but superior

justices rectified the sentence IN OUR FAVOUR" (capitals in the original).<sup>21</sup>

The Monterrey family at this point accused the Franco family of encouraging Pocabayenos to steal land from Thana and persuaded the people of Thana that this was the case. Throughout the thirties and forties there were sporadic incidences of conflict and murder on both sides with each **haciendado** claiming that the other had encouraged 'his' peasants to attack the other hacienda. It was during this period that the big attack on Pocabaya probably occurred causing a temporary mass evacuation of the village. There were clearly, however, a number of serious incidents between the two communities right into the sixties.

Tiudusyu, a Pocabaya survivor of the conflict, recounts his experience:

The **patrones** of Thana told us that the **aynoqa** fields of Salapata were theirs. They told us that we could not grow our crops there. We did and that day they started with their guns. They took some people prisoner and killed them. Then there was help. They came from above: from Quqanita, Murumanita, Chuqupata, T'ula T'ula; that is how they came. Six hundred people came and in all three hundred died. Women died, men died. They all shot each other with rifles; they were all well armed.

It was a long time ago: my children who are now all grown up were babies.

We should not have fought each other. We were all very stupid...We fought like animals. The **patrones** should have fought among themselves.

The Pocabayenos always regarded Eulogio Franco as their **patrón** even though he had sold the hacienda to his daughter Ernestina and her husband in 1942. Thus, the people of Pocabaya recognised her husband, Luis Mirmilan as **patrón**, representing Franco. The children of Monterrey contested the "disgusting intrigues and ambitions" of their uncle and their cousin's "despicable ambition to usurp the hacienda and leave [them] in the street" in a number of legal petitions to a variety of judicial officers.

The dispute continued beyond the revolution of 1952. Until that point, and to the chagrin of the Monterrey family, the Pocabayenos regarded Franco as the **haciendado** and **patrón** and claimed against his son-in-law, Luis Mirmilan, in 1953 under the auspices of the Agrarian Reform. This act implicitly recognised that there was but one **patrón** in Pocabaya and not two, to the absolute fury of the Monterrey family. When the situation

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<sup>21</sup> Archivo de la Reforma Agraria Decreto Supremo No 2968, 24-2-55, p.57.

was investigated by the authorities of the Agrarian Reform in 1953, the haciendas were recognised as being separate but there was a recognition of an area of dispute between the two haciendas, the lands known as Salapata and Salapata Chico (24 has) as well as 100 hectares of pasture land. This land was claimed by the Monterreys as part of Thana.

The view widely held in Pocabaya and Thana is that the conflict was a conflict between the **patrones**, that is, the **hacendados**, who got the peasants to fight for them. The dispute ended in the courts of the Agrarian Reform and the lands in question were officially ceded to Pocabaya in 1967. The consequences are still felt today, however, and Pocabayenos are very reluctant to talk about it. It was even hinted to me that there were cases of cannibalism on both sides but I was unable to establish the veracity of this. Although people from Pocabaya and Thana now inter-marry, there is still a degree of latent tension which occasionally comes to fore and results in violence between groups from the two communities. These incidents, however, do not compare with the killings that occurred in previous decades and is, as far as I can tell, restricted to fist fights and fights with rocks.

All the older members of the community who could remember the days when Pocabaya was still an hacienda can recount tales of beatings and other cruel treatment by the land owners. Most irritating, it seems, was the servility that was required of them when they were in the presence of the **patrón**: "We had to serve the **patrón** and greet him with **tatay** (father/sir) and he would greet us as children" as old Anklisa told me. Old Pocabayenos who were children at the time however also remember his fine horse when he came and the sweets and food he would give out when he arrived. Many people also reminisce about the time when the people were united and express nostalgia for the solidarity and cohesion that has since been diluted. Another element remembered is the greater fertility and quantity of the land in the past. Despite receiving more land after the Agrarian Reform, a greater population combined with over-use and land erosion has reduced significantly the proportion of productive land per person.

## From the 1952 Revolution to the Present Day

Hacendados such as Eulogio Franco were the ruling class of Bolivia<sup>22</sup>, along with the owners of the tin mines, from Independence to the revolution of 1952. The Revolution and the rise to power of the Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario (MNR) can be seen as a revolution of the rapidly-growing petit bourgeoisie (Klein 1992:227) against large capitalists and landowners. This class first saw itself clearly in opposition to the ruling powers during the Chaco war against Paraguay in the 1930s. Alexander notes that many of the lower-ranking officers were drawn from the emergent middle and upper middle classes and

...suffered alongside their troops the privations of the campaigns...many of them came to blame the disaster not only on the Army leadership that was immediately responsible for carrying on the war, but also on the civilian rulers who had led Bolivia into the conflict in the first place. They began to question the whole social, economic, and political system which they conceived had made possible such a bloody defeat.

Alexander 1982:66

The Indians who had served as foot soldiers in the Chaco war returned to the unchanged hacienda system of coerced labour but they returned with perspectives, like those of the young officers, were greatly changed by their wartime mobilisation. As Hahn notes (1992:62), "The campesinos [peasants] were ready to view themselves in a new political context - one that would promise political equality and property rights to the land they worked." The revolution deposed the semi-feudal oligarchy and established legal equality for all citizens. The Indian masses were enfranchised and in one stroke the voting population jumped from 200,000 to just under one million (Klein *op.cit*:232).

The uneasy alliance between the urban petit bourgeoisie, miners, and peasants was strained from its inception and the MNR did not have a clear programme for the countryside. The Indians, however, began to take matters into their own hands and from April 1952 to the middle of 1953 systematically destroyed the hacienda system. By August 1953, when the president, Paz Estenssoro, decreed agrarian reform, *de facto* land

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<sup>22</sup> The 6% of landowners who owned 1,000 hectares or more of land controlled fully 92% of all cultivated land in the republic in 1950 (Klein 1992:228).

distribution had already occurred in many areas of Bolivia (Hahn 1992:70). With the elimination of the hated **hacendados** and many of their middlemen, however, and the granting of land titles, the Indians became a relatively conservative force in the nation "and actually grew indifferent if not hostile to their former urban worker colleagues" (Klein 1992:235).

This state of affairs left the basic mechanisms of production in the countryside unchanged from before the Revolution for there was no investment in the agricultural sector (*cf.* Alexander 1982:88) with the exception of the large capital-intensive non-Indian zones of production of the Department of Santa Cruz. It is Hahn's thesis (1992) that this lack of attention coupled with a form of social cooperation qualitatively distinct from the form of social cooperation characteristic of a capitalist mode of production, maintained the 'indigenist' mode of production in the countryside. Once they achieved ownership of their own land, the Indians were able to continue production of the land much as they had done before. What was very different was the absence of the humiliating oppression of the **hacendado**.

The vulgar racism of the Colonial and Republican periods has by no means disappeared, however, even if the rhetoric has somewhat changed. It is overwhelmingly taken as self- evident in the dominant culture of contemporary Bolivia that the presence of Indian communities is at best anachronistic and that they are an obstacle to progress.

This line of thought is also by no means a monopoly of the political right. The revolution of 1952 and the subsequent Agrarian Reform dealt with the Indians by legislating them away: there were no longer any Indians in Bolivia but **campesinos**, peasants<sup>23</sup>. The new Bolivia was to be modern and there was no place in it for backward Indians. The simple fact of speaking Aymara became, and still is, a mark of inferiority in the new social order. The message to the Aymaras was to slough off their culture and become **mestizos**. The reforms of the nineteen fifties changed the lives of Indians enormously by redistributing land to them and giving them title over that land and by providing some education. Possession of the land and enfranchisement has given the Indians a political power they have not possessed since the Conquest. However, they have largely exercised this power passively and national politics in Pocabaya is generally reduced to whomever gives most to the Indians during election years. Votes are 'encouraged' by the gifts of school equipment and food to the **Secretario General** who

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<sup>23</sup> This policy has been inherited by all succeeding governments.

distributes these goods within the community.

A large part of the disinterest in national politics is its supreme irrelevance to the lives of rural Indians such as those who live in Pocabaya. Unless involved in coca production, the rural Indian majority is entirely ignored in terms of national economic policy. None of the main political parties' activists have gone into the countryside to organise and listen to the needs of the peasants. As a result, the countryside suffers from gross underinvestment and political neglect (*cf.* Alexander 1982:88-9). The typical pattern of the MNR government which came into power with the 1952 revolution, was to organise the Indian communities under syndicalist models and coöpt them into the Trades Union movement. The only political movement genuinely to address the political views of Aymara peasants is Katarismo, an indigenist movement which has been careful not to be subsumed under any one of the larger political groups headed by **mestizos** (*cf.* Albó 1987).

The 1952 Revolution changed the dominant class from a white landowning elite to a predominantly **mestizo** urban elite. Like the Peruvian revolution of 1974, it was one of the emerging middle classes against the white oligarchy. Even though the Indians joined in the struggle, they were ultimately marginalised or coöpted into the syndicalist movements. Community politics were unionised with the leading roles at the community level going to the Secretary General, the Secretary of Justice and so on. These offices largely supplanted the leadership of the traditional *jilaqatas* (see following chapter).

For the Indians, the Revolution resulted in a change in the mode of domination from one which was crudely oppressive and which excluded them from the national discourse as atavistic remnants, to one which sought to deny their separateness altogether and attempted to bring them into the national discourse under the rubric of **campesinos** or peasants.

The mode of domination was all the more subtle: the dominant classes...

...dispensed with strategies aimed expressly (which does not mean manifestly) and directly (i.e. without being mediated by the mechanisms) at the domination of individuals, a domination which in this case is the condition of the appropriation of the material and symbolic profits of labour.

(Bourdieu 1977:184)

The post-revolutionary society included the Indians as peasants and drew them into

a national system of values. They would henceforth no longer be oppressed as Indians for there were no more Indians to oppress; as peasants, they would be expected to form unions and support the policies of the leftist governments. The refusal to recognise peasants as Aymaras or Quechuas, however, placed everything on the terms of the new elite. In the new Bolivia, Aymaras and other ethnic minorities were expected to slough off their cultural baggage and march towards progress, but a progress that had little meaning to indigenous sets of values.

One of the most obvious benefits of the Revolution was universal education. Until the nineteen fifties the vast majority of peasants were illiterate and monolingual. In many cases they were forbidden to speak Spanish and when attempts were made to organise schools, they were frequently burned to the ground by the army and the *haciendados*. The struggle to found a school in Warisata, a community on the *altiplano* not far from Pocabaya, was long, violent and protracted. As a success it became famous and a potent symbol to all Aymaras as an icon of independence and self-help.

The Indians were even given some access to 'cultural capital' through universal education. As Bourdieu notes, however, the right to education when not all have equal access to the means of achieving qualifications serves to obscure fundamental social injustice:

...academic qualifications are to cultural capital what money is to economic capital. By giving the same value to all holders of the same certificate, so that any one of them can take the place of the other, the educational system minimizes the obstacles to the free circulation of cultural capital which results from it being incorporated in individual persons.

(*op.cit.*:186)

Education has given Pocabayenos greater access to the outside world and a means by which they can begin to defend their rights. Despite the poor quality of education in Pocabaya, it has given some Pocabayenos a start in acquiring the means for dealing with the national culture and, perhaps more importantly, some confidence in the belief that there is some sense of justice in Bolivia. This was sufficient for Pocabayenos to travel to the Office of the Agrarian Reform in La Paz in 1967 to argue their claim to the land in dispute with the neighbouring village of Thana (see above). Pocabayenos are quite aware that education, and above all the ability to speak Spanish, is central to their ability to defend their rights to gain access to the symbolic capital of the ruling classes.

In the words of Jirman:

Now there is the law, the law in Spanish which [the children] learn at school. Now they know Spanish, they know how to read and they can write. It is from this that we can now defend ourselves. There is one word/language (**aru**) (for the Aymaras and others).

This would be all very well if the access to symbolic capital were equal which it is quite clearly not. The present situation is one where the Indians have been drawn into an system of values which gives the impression that they are included. Even so, such a system provides the ruling classes with what Max Weber calls "a theodicy of its own privilege".

...not so much through the ideologies it produces or inculcates (as those who speak of "ideological apparatuses" would have it); but rather through practical justification of the established order which it achieves by using the overt connection between qualifications and jobs as a smokescreen for the connection - which it records surreptitiously, under cover of formal equality - between the cultural capital they have inherited - in other words, through the legitimacy it confers on the transmission of this form of heritage.

(Bourdieu *op.cit.*:188)

Not all Pocabayenos share Jirman's great optimism when it comes to the benefits of education; some such as Irkulyanu appreciate the implications of the inequality of education and would agree with Bourdieu:

If one (at school) learns to read and write well s/he will still not have learned enough. We do not realise... that if we move in this manner we will stay behind just like these schools.

We won't even get a little education/empowerment because it is so very little. There is less justice. How can s/he, after having entered education, come out as an engineer, or as agronomist or a teacher - it is very

Si maynitixa (iskwilan) ukham sum yatikañix qillqañ, liyiñ jan suma yatiqañixa. Janiw amuyasktant...ukham sarnaqaskañanix qhiparuw kidaskanix iwal aka iskwilanakakix iwal kidaskiskani.

Janiw juk'amp kapasitisianist minusakixay edukasiunax utjchix minus liyinikaxchixay intuns kunjams awir mant'aspax jach'a injinyiru mistuñatakix ikrunu mistuñatak profesor mistuñataki

difficult. That is why it is a mess and then the money is spent in vain. S/he will go behind, s/he will regress.

wali difisilaxiya. Ukat frakasu utji ya intuns inamaya quillqi kastu. Kidasiwayxaraki; ultimo sarxaraki; qhiparux sarxi.

There is, furthermore, a double-edged "legitimising discourse" since Indians are not only excluded by the virtue of their lack of education and urbanity (i.e. symbolic capital) but by the very fact that they are Indians.

The metropolitan system of values exhorts them to join the Hispanic culture but this entails the surrender of their own values. The consequence of this is that they are required not only to give up their cultural identity and language, but leave a cultural system of values through which they can rise and gain prestige and self respect (see chapter 2) for one which ignores or denies that valuation and places them at the very bottom of the social scale. They are left with three avenues of action: the total rejection of native culture and the embrace of metropolitan culture especially through evangelical Protestantism; the rejection of Hispanic culture by the espousal of the millenarian nativist movement Katarismo;<sup>1</sup> or an uneasy negotiation between the two. The extreme social dislocation which is experienced with migration to La Paz is testament to the difficulty Indians have in entering the world of the dominant culture (*cf.* Albó, Greaves and Sandoval 1981; Ströbele-Gregor 1989).

In contemporary Pocabaya, people are exposed to both indigenous and Hispanic systems of values. At some times one or other is almost closed off, at others there is clearly competition between what is valued traditionally and what is valued by the metropolitan culture. Actors frequently use ideas from outside to undermine institutions based on Aymara values. One such example concerns issues surrounding gender relations which is explored in chapter 4.

It is also the case that the position of authority has changed. The elders of Pocabaya tend to be monolingual and limited in their experience of the outside world. Their valued knowledge is being reduced into a smaller and smaller field. Their authority is undermined by their lack of Spanish and those who do speak Spanish use it to assert and maintain their authority over women and to subvert the authority of older men. The knowledge of Spanish as a means of gaining access to the symbolic capital the dominant culture is undisputed, even by those who do not speak it. It is this recognition of the need to Hispanicise to a greater or lesser degree that undermines the primacy of

the native culture.

The conflict of cultures and the acceptance of the temporal dominance of Hispanic culture is clearly illustrated in Aymara cosmology as is the belief that, ultimately, no syncretism or mediation is possible.

Now that we have located Pocabaya in space and time, we move on to see how Pocabayenos locate themselves in the world with respect to the land on which they live, the spirits who protect and nourish them and, of course, each other.

# Chapter II

## Thakix<sup>1</sup>

The Pocabayeno conception of maturity is one of process whereby one goes through life gradually approaching the ideal of the good and complete person, **sumá jaqi**. This process is called **jaqichasiña**<sup>2</sup> and is conceived in terms of the way or the path, **thakix**. We see how time and space are viewed together and here what is essentially a movement through time, is described with a word generally associated with movement through space.

Life is a process of incorporation into the community and the world of the spirits. At birth, a baby is barely considered to be human and the process of legitimation begins with the simple naming ceremony. The first hair-cutting, **ritucha**, is a much more important stage of life for it is then that the whole community formally recognises the child. This process continues until adulthood when a young adult takes the most important step to becoming fully human - marriage. To be joined with another of the opposite sex is considered essential to being fully human. As life proceeds the couple will take on social responsibilities such as the sponsorship of **rituchas**, weddings (**compadrazgo**) and fiestas as well as the assumption of political office (**cargos**) when the incorporation into the community reaches a more profound level. Finally, at death the person is incorporated into the world of the spirits who are the guardians of the community.

### Conception and Birth

Conception is generally reckoned as having occurred at the time of a fiesta, and the birth, similarly, is predicted as occurring around a fiesta more or less nine months

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<sup>1</sup> The suffix **-xa** is a nominal as well as orational suffix. It is similar to the definite article in Indo-European languages although is somewhat more emphatic. The final 'a' of the suffix is frequently elided as in this case.

<sup>2</sup> **jaqi.cha.si.ña**: **jaqi**, a person; **cha**, to make; **si**, reflexive; **ña**, infinitive. Thus: "to make oneself a person."

hence. The identification of conception and birth with fiestas is maintained even if the evidence is overwhelmingly to the contrary: a birth is described as occurring at the time of a fiesta even if the actual birth was weeks away from one. It is, however, indeed the case that there is greatly increased sexual activity during fiestas when almost the whole village and virtually all the men are drunk.<sup>3</sup>

During pregnancy, the woman will continue her chores but they will gradually diminish, particularly the heavy ones, as the pregnancy develops. A pregnant mother has recourse to three specialists in case there are any problems during her pregnancy: the **yatiri**, the **qulliri**, or the **uswiri**. The **yatiri** deals with problems of a more spiritual nature, those matters that involve the **ajayu** (soul). The **qulliri** deals with more superficial illnesses, those that involve **chuyma**, the life force, and the **uswiri** is best described as a midwife.<sup>4</sup> The **uswiri** is also a **qulliri** but specialised in the problems of pregnancy. She will massage the abdomen and predict the date of the birth. This date is the date of the fiesta during which the **uswiri** believes the child will be born. She will also make sure the foetus is positioned properly by performing **thalthapiña** - having the mother lie on an **awayu** (carrying cloth) and manoeuvring the **awayu** by the ends.

None of these specialists is present at the actual birth unless there is a particular problem. A birth generally takes place at home where the mother is attended by her husband. This is in sharp contrast to the people of Kaata studied by Bastien where "delivery is a female activity from which men are excluded" (Bastien 1987:87). In Pocabaya it is the man's duty to make sure she is comfortable, warm and well-fed. He will fill the room with smoke as this is thought to assist the birth. The mother is fed on lamb broth during labour and for several days after the birth.

Once the child is born it is cleaned and swaddled but not fed until at least twenty-four hours after birth; in some areas I was told the baby is not fed for three days. The reason given is that this makes the baby hardy but it may also be the case that a very weak baby will die quickly and thus not tax the emotional and economic resources of the family. By my calculations the child mortality in Pocabaya (that is, up to five years of

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<sup>3</sup> I was told by some informants that if conception occurs when one or both of the couple is drunk a miscarriage or malformation occurs. Others, however, denied the significance of sobriety in conception. Harvey (1987:187) also reports the belief that deformed children are the result of a drunken conception for Ocongate in Peru.

<sup>4</sup> The word **uswiri** comes from **usu**, pregnant (it also means illness) and the suffix **iri** which indicates profession.

age) is 26%.<sup>5</sup> The figure may be actually higher as neonatal deaths (before the first week) are almost never recorded or considered as a live birth.

I was given two differing accounts regarding the disposal of the afterbirth (**parisa**). I was told it is either buried inside the house or buried by a brook with fast-flowing water. The consequence of not burying the afterbirth in a dark part of the house is that the mother will become very ill. Dark areas of houses as well as brooks are associated with the tellurian spirits. It appears that the afterbirth, metonymically linked to the child, must be held in the bosom of the tellurian spirits and protected from damaging sunlight. If the afterbirth is not buried by the brook, the baby's face is believed to become deformed and may lead to death. A child, as every living thing, is the product of the fertility of the **Pachamama**, the chthonic earth matrix. In the first days of life especially, s/he must be protected from the inimical forces of the upper world, especially the sun, which is its presiding deity.<sup>6</sup>

## Naming

The first ritual of life is the naming ceremony, known as **sutiyaña**,<sup>7</sup> which in Pocabaya is combined with the baptism. It is not a big ceremony and is attended only by immediate family members and the catechist appointed by the priest, who baptises the child.

Salt and water are mixed into a paste until it resembles fat (**lik'jamawa**) and then daubed on the baby's mouth. Salt is considered to be a quintessentially human attribute and the anointing with salt is the first step of incorporation into human society (cf. Harris 1980). The fact that the child is daubed on the mouth is consistent with the belief that

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<sup>5</sup> This figure was arrived at by comparing household birth and death rates for the previous five years. There is almost certainly an under count in the reported births as well as deaths especially with the deaths of neonates. In a number of cases there was a dispute in the family as to how many children had been born. Although I attempted to account for this, the figure of 26% must be taken as a conservative estimate. This figure is, however, comparable to data collected by nurses and doctors working in rural highland Bolivia although one must presume they face similar problems in counting.

<sup>6</sup> For more detail on upper and lower worlds and the negative power of the sun, see chapter 6.

<sup>7</sup>**suti.ya.ña:** **suti**, name; **ya** verbal suffix, 'to make or do'; **ña** infinitive. Thus: to name.

speech is a fundamentally human characteristic (see below).<sup>8</sup> Body fat, which the paste of salt and water resembles, is believed to be a source of essential life force (**chuyma**) and the diminution or loss of it entails illness or death.<sup>9</sup> Fat (**lik'i**) is a common offering to the autochthonous spirits as a substitute for human sacrifice (*cf.* Sallnow 1987; Bastien 1978 and also chapter 6). Here, however, the offering of the 'fat' is reversed. The child receives his essential humanity from the underworld (**Manqhapacha**) by being anointed with salt and this creates a debt: the debt can be delayed by offerings such as animal sacrifice in the form of the live animal or its fat, but in the end the human body and its life force must return whence it came.<sup>10</sup> The salt ceremony marks the beginning of a personal relationship with the **Manqhapacha** and its denizens that will last a lifetime and beyond. Salt is a mineral found in the ground (*jayuxa uraqit jalsu*) and therefore associated with the autochthonous beings of the underworld such as the **Pachamama** and the **achachilas** (see chapter 6).<sup>11</sup>

Now we can make more sense of why birth and conception are always reckoned with respect to fiestas when there is no shortage of empirical evidence to contradict this (at least in the case of birth). Considering births and conceptions as occurring during fiestas, that is, sacred time, when there is an intensity of human energy and an irruption of chthonic energy (*cf.* Allen 1988 *passim*), is a recognition that fertility and human life are dependent on the supernatural world. It is not only the fact that during fiestas people are closest to and in greatest communication with the **Manqhapacha**, the earth matrix, but that at these periods the beings of the **Manqhapacha** are most satisfied: fiestas are explicitly seen as times when one 'pays' the **Manqhapacha**, (usually in these contexts represented as the **Pachamama**). In return for this payment the beings of the

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<sup>8</sup> In Kaata Bastien notes that the child is actually daubed with salt on the tongue (Bastien 1978:95).

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of the loss of fat by **kharisiris**, vampire-like creatures, see following chapter.

<sup>10</sup> For a further discussion of sacrifice and relations with the **Manqhapacha** see chapter 6.

<sup>11</sup> Arnold (1989:268) also notes the association of salt with chthonic female spirits in ayllu Qaqachaka in Norte de Potosí. Bouysse-Cassagne and Harris, however, have argued the opposite, that salt is an element of God's sphere (1987).

**Manqhapacha** bring rain, ensure the fertility of the crops, the well-being of people and, as we have seen, ensure human fertility as well.<sup>12</sup>

Immediately after the anointing with salt, the child is usually baptised by the local catechist. After establishing his relationship with the **Manqhapacha** and its forces, the child is anointed in a ritual that makes him a Christian (*kristyanu*). Baptism is important to the child for, apart from his relationship with the **Manqhapacha**, he must also live in a world where other forces apply. In a Christian age, not to be a Christian leaves one vulnerable to the powers of a hostile God. The combined ceremony then, establishes a connection with the source of life and humanity on the one hand whilst underwriting it with a rite of inclusion into the world of the presiding deity.<sup>13</sup>

This baptism is not officially recognised by the Church and the priest must perform an official baptism himself at a later date either in Sorata for a fee or for a much smaller fee when he makes his biannual visit.

Both rituals indicate that the acquisition of identity, and indeed personhood, is something contingent on the sanction of society (*cf.* Bloch and Guggenheim 1981). An Aymara individual is defined by his/her insertion into the group: into the primary kinship group; the extended network of fictive kin and the reciprocal ties s/he has with this network and with the community in which s/he lives (*cf.* Spedding 1989:292; Albó 1985:8). This process of inclusion begins with the first naming and continues through life.

## Neonatal deaths

If the child dies before this simple ceremony, it is not buried in the cemetery, but far away from the village in a barren place called Kimurpata. This salt ceremony takes place between one and two weeks after the birth and at this stage of its existence the baby is totally unsocialised and in a sense non-human for it has neither speech nor even a name. An unnamed baby is considered still to be a foetus (*sullu*) and it is for this reason

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<sup>12</sup> Fiestas and their place in communication with the earth matrix and its representations discussed more thoroughly in the following chapter.

<sup>13</sup> Possession of a baptismal certificate, moreover, is the easiest way of obtaining a Bolivia identity card and, in practice, the only way open to Indians. For a further discussion on these themes, see chapters 5 and 6.

that data on neonatal deaths are so difficult to obtain. It is impossible to know if one is recording infanticide or neonatal deaths and after some time a mother will tend not to consider neonatal deaths as births at all. On several occasions when talking to women about the number of babies they had, they omitted births of babies that died in the first months and of which I happened to be aware.

A child's *ajayu* (spirit), even after it has been baptised, is not considered to be secure in the body and is particularly vulnerable to *sustu* (Sp. *susto*, fright) where the *ajayu* leaves the body due to some kind of shock or fright.<sup>14</sup> Punishing a child too severely, I was told, can effect *sustu* and loss of the *ajayu*. The *ajayu* gradually becomes more firmly entrenched as the child grows up into adolescence although adults, too, can suffer from the loss of the *ajayu* due to fright or shock. It may very well be that the belief that *sustu* is particularly prevalent in children is a way of rationalising high child mortality which is articulated in terms of the process of the socialisation of the child: that is, there is a correlation between the children's decreasing mortality and the process by which the community invests the child with more and more status and affection.<sup>15</sup>

## Care of the Infant

After the baby is born, it will be swaddled tightly and even have its face covered so that it will not catch cold. A small baby is considered so vulnerable that even light is inimical to its well-being. As time goes by, the face will be exposed and the baby will be swaddled for less and less time. The mother will carry the baby in her *awayu* carrying cloth and breast feed on demand until the child is about six months old when the weaning process begins with some weak coffee. Nevertheless the child will continue breast-feeding to the end of the second year although, of course, less frequently. Full weaning tends to occur earlier if the mother becomes pregnant once again.

In a large family the principal care of the child is taken by one of the daughters. It will be her responsibility to carry the baby in the *awayu*, comforting it when it cries.

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<sup>14</sup> Once when I was travelling past a remote hamlet in the cordillera, I was seen by several children who ran away frightened. Their father caught up with me and demanded compensation for the *sustu* I had caused for they would surely now become sick.

<sup>15</sup> Crandon-Malamud (1991:133) asserts that the belief in soul loss through fright has its origins in mediæval Spain.

If the baby needs milk she will take it to the mother. In general a child's parents will pay little attention to it; its siblings will generally play with it and, quite important, teach it to speak. Older siblings will teach their younger brothers and sisters to speak by getting them to repeat words, and they often make it into some sort of game. There is also an element of ridicule when the child consistently mispronounces a word, and this no doubt, impels a child to speak 'properly'. An important part of this socialisation process is teaching the child the correct forms of address. If an uncle visits the house they will instruct the child to address him as 'tiu'; if godmother, they will similarly exhort the child with "Märina samay, märina samay, say 'Godmother', say 'Godmother'".

It is typically the case that not much physical affection is directed towards children. In fact, it is safe to say that children are largely ignored beyond their most vital requirements. In Pocabaya a baby will very rarely be referred to by name, the generic *wawa* (baby) being much more common. It is generally not until a child is old enough to walk and talk and perform tasks that s/he will actually be called by name. Spedding notes that for Aymara of the *yungas* a child's name is generally first used when a parent or sibling wishes it to fetch or do something, that is, in an imperative (1989:292).

It has been argued (eg. Kurtz 1992) that a consequence of such child-rearing practices and the absence of 'mirroring' on the part of the parent with the child allows for a different development of a personal identity: the child, finding that its personality is not affirmed as an individual, seeks a personality in the group.<sup>16</sup>

The process of *thaki*, the path of life, is a process of progressive integration into the community and an ever-greater identification with the community until person and community eventually merge as *achachilas*.

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<sup>16</sup> I would not wish to impute a simple causal relationship to child rearing practices and strong group identity but the intensely communal nature of Aymara personal identity has been noted by others (cf. Albó 1985) and early child-rearing practices may very well be the first step in the creation of such an identity. For a further discussion of the strong sense of groups identity, see the following chapter.

## Childhood

The next ceremony for a child is the **ritucha** or first hair-cutting. The **ritucha** is a rite that exists all over the Andes (*cf.* Allen 1988; Carter and Mamani 1982; Bastien 1978) and marks the entry of a child into the world as social person. **Ritucha** is frequently referred to as **muruña** which means hair-cutting but also refers to the cutting off of a bull's horns; a hornless bull is known as **muru**. **Muruña** in both cases refers to the cutting off of the 'wild' part of bulls or children; that is, the domestication of the subject.<sup>17</sup>

The **ritucha** takes place when the child is approximately a year and a half old and has already begun to speak. Unlike the naming ceremony, this involves the whole community. The ceremony begins with a libation to the spirit of the house, the **kunturmamani**.<sup>18</sup> The **pärinu** and **märina** (godfather and godmother) will start cutting the child's matted locks and they put money in an **inkuña**, a woven cloth, for the child. This process is repeated by all the adults present, albeit with considerably less money. If there is any hair left after all have had their turn, the godparents will finish the cut. The locks of hair are then put in the rafters of the house.

After the actual hair-cutting all those present will join in thanks to the **Pachamama** and the **kunturmamani** and proceed with communal drinking and eating. The drinking is also accompanied by coca-chewing with the mother of the child giving out coca leaves with sugar and sweets wrapped within.<sup>19</sup> The hair-cutting ceremony is the first ritual through which the child is formally introduced to the community. It also marks the transition from infancy (**wawa**) to becoming a boy or girl (**yuqalla** and **imilla**,

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<sup>17</sup> Harris (1982a:64) in contrast suggests that **muru** refers to the Spanish **Moro** (Moor, infidel) and also notes that for the Laymi, **muru wawa** refers to an unnamed child rather than one who has just gone through **ritucha** which is the case in Pocabaya.

<sup>18</sup> **Kunturmamani** comes from a combination of two words, **kuntur**, condor, and **mamani** falcon. Both these birds are associated with the tellurian forces, especially when they act as messengers.

<sup>19</sup> This is one of the rare occasions when women will chew coca and the sweet element differentiates this type of chewing from that usually done by men which, instead, is done with a reactive agent based on ash (**yuhta**). This is in sharp contrast to other areas of the Andes, in Bolivia as well as in Peru, where women chew regularly and frequently (*cf.* Spedding 1989; Allen 1986).

respectively). After this point the child can officially be mourned at death. During **Todos Santos**, the feast of the dead, the dead child may be mourned at the grave through the presentation of its favourite foods as is the case with deceased adults. Even so, it is rare for a child to be mourned in this way and it is almost exclusively adults who are remembered in **Todos Santos**. The first hair-cutting also marks the beginning of the age of responsibility and from this age on the child is said to begin with household chores. The reality is, however, that a couple of years pass before the child begins to make a significant contribution to the household.

Carter & Mamani's description of childhood in Irpa Chico to the south of Lake Titicaca on the **altiplano** (1982:150-2 and *passim*) varies so dramatically from what I observed in Pocabaya that I believe it warrants some attention. They stress the great role the parents play in socialising the child, teaching them how to speak properly, behave properly and wash once a week. In Pocabaya, by contrast, it is the siblings who socialise the child insofar as there is any formal socialising for it is mostly done by observation and imitation. It is, for example, quite common to observe children play at sowing or ploughing together in organised groups and in the same formations their parents would use. I have observed siblings patiently teach their younger brother or sister how to speak or perform a task, but rarely parents. As a general rule, children in Pocabaya are left to their own devices. If a small child wants to help with the sowing s/he is given a small hoe and helps even though the help is usually totally ineffective. By the same token, if s/he doesn't want to help, s/he is allowed to play alone or with another sibling. When a child gets to seven or eight more responsibility is assumed such as herding the sheep but these duties are generally performed willingly as they can play with their friends up in the mountain pastures all day.

In general, parents have a very carefree attitude to children, who are rarely scolded harshly, let alone punished. This contrasts to the draconian punishments meted out to children in Irpa Chico. Carter and Mamani (1982) describe a tub of cold water set permanently in the patio for the purpose of dumping naughty children in. They also recount the frequency and severity of whipping on children over seven years of age.

Similarly:

When a child breaks a plate, a cup, a jug or whatever object, the parents take a piece of the broken object and pass it over the child's wrist almost to the point of cutting the skin, symbolically cutting the hand for the damage done to the family's goods.

(Carter & Mamani 1982:151)

In Pocabaya such a treatment of children would be inconceivable and I am unable to account for this great difference in the attitude towards children in an area so close to Pocabaya. When walking towards the lake, I heard that a young girl had thrown herself down a well because she had lost a sheep and feared her father's reaction. No child in Pocabaya would be so afraid of her parents. I am unable to provide any reason why the treatment of children should vary so much in such a relatively small area and I can only conjecture that this harsh treatment is perhaps related to the reputation for hostility and violence that the people of this area of the **altiplano** have among other Aymaras as well as **mestizos**.<sup>20</sup>

## School

The institution of the school is not a traditional part of the **thaki**, nor is it part of the traditional notion of **suma jaqi**. The ability to deal with the metropolitan culture outside has also come to be valued within the community even to point of undermining traditional value systems. The school is the first place a child is formally exposed to these values and the passage through school along with the ability to read and write Spanish has become important in the Pocabaya conception of what it is to be a complete and successful person.

The school teacher is usually an Aymara-speaker from the **altiplano**. He is a respected member of the community even though he may not even be married. Both the teachers I met over the two years in Pocabaya wore their sense of superiority lightly but visibly and only rarely made explicit that they thought the Pocabayenos were backward and dirty compared to the people of the **altiplano**, at least to the adults of Pocabaya. The first thing one teacher did every morning was line the children up and inspect the cleanliness of their clothing, the tidiness of their hair, cleanliness of their feet etc..

School in Pocabaya has to be paid for with a registration fee of 10 Pesos Bolivianos (approximately £2). This is by no means an exorbitant sum for Pocabayenos and is the equivalent to four beers. Nevertheless, at the beginning of every school year the teacher must persuade and cajole parents to send their children to school. Quite a few parents are very keen to send their children to school because they want their

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<sup>20</sup> The people of the town of Achacachi and surrounding areas, for example, have a reputation in Pocabaya and the area of Sorata for their aggression and cannibalism.

children to 'get on' in life or simply because they believe it is important for their children to be educated even if they never use what they learn at school. As one father told me, "It will make them better people." Despite a great personal sacrifice another parent went as far as making sure all his five children went to the Intermediate School in Ch'exe. Almost all his children who are very respected and well-liked members of the community stayed in Pocobaya. Their ability to articulate intelligently and clearly in village meetings and in general, without being patronising, has earned them high status in village affairs despite their relative youth.

Other parents send their children only reluctantly because they see no point in sending the children to learn things they will have no use of later in life. Others say they would like to send their son or daughter to school but they really need the child to herd the sheep.

School starts with all the children lining up in two rows, one of boys and another of girls, in front of the school for inspection. On Mondays the flag is raised but every day the children march in time and do several about-faces as they sing a national song. This marching seems to be an essential part of the day in all schools in Bolivia. On asking the teacher why they always march, I was given the reply that they will need it for the army. "But the girls don't go into the army." I protested, for which he had no answer. He was also utterly astonished when I said that school children didn't march where I came from.

There are only three years in the Pocobaya school with a total number of 24 students with only six in the third year. On a typical day the teacher may spend over an hour teaching the children to recite something like 'Mi Patria', "My Fatherland":

|                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bolivia is my Fatherland          | Mi Patria es Bolivia        |
| I love my Fatherland              | Yo amo mi Patria            |
| My Fatherland is extensive and    | Mi Patria es extenso y rica |
| rich                              |                             |
| I shall study for its prestige    | Estudiaré por su prestigio  |
| ... I shall work for its progress | Trabajará por su progreso y |
| and greatness                     | grandeza                    |
| Fellow students:                  | Compañeros:                 |
| Viva Bolivia!                     | Viva Bolivia!               |
| VIVA!                             | VIVA!                       |

Students will take it in turns to stand in front of the class and recite this to their fellow students even though the most advanced students will at best know half the words.

The basic things one learns at school are reading and writing and mathematics. Mathematics cover the four basic mathematical functions and literacy starts with the alphabet. Despite the fact that the teacher is an Aymara himself, he does not teach them to read and write in Aymara but only in Spanish. Moreover he complicates the matter by teaching the three scripts simultaneously: print, capitals and cursive. This, combined with the fact that a number of phonemes represented by the letters simply do not exist in Aymara, makes the whole process of learning to read and write very difficult indeed. In the second year one learns to identify stress patterns in Spanish words. A parallel in English would be learning about spondees, iambs and trochees before acquiring even a basic vocabulary. The result after three years is basic arithmetic, a prodigious knowledge of grammatical terms and an inability to speak Spanish. At best, the schooling gives them a grounding for learning Spanish later on in life, but I never met anyone who actually learned Spanish to any degree of fluency in Pocabaya's school.

The teacher in Pocabaya, although an Aymara-speaker, makes no attempt to educate the children in Aymara; he seems more keen to inculcate in his students patriotic values than to provide them with anything approaching a 'decent' education, let alone one in Aymara. Their inability to progress at the speed of the more acculturated children of the **altiplano** is readily put down by the teacher to their backwardness and the fact that their parents don't speak Spanish to them as they are beginning to do in the **altiplano**.

Schooling in Pocabaya principally serves to introduce Pocabayeno children to the values of metropolitan Bolivia. Children learn how to catch a bus and take care of the

traffic on the way to school. They learn that the Chileans are bastards who took away Bolivia's access to the sea, an event which is celebrated annually across Bolivia and in the Pocabaya school.

The education Pocabayenos receive in their school is one which offers them the rudiments of literacy and numeracy and a heavy dose of inadequacy. They are told that they are dirty and stupid and that their language is inadequate and even wrong.<sup>21</sup> On one occasion the teacher groaned with frustration and astonishment at the stupidity of his pupils. He had drawn a picture of a bird's wing on the blackboard and asked the youngest pupils what it was he had drawn. One by one they said 'chheqha', the Aymara word for 'wing', and one by one he corrected them and said it was not 'chheqha' but 'ala', the Spanish word for 'wing' until no child dared open his or her mouth. The poor children were totally confused and sat in silence as the teacher ranted at them.

The issue of bilingual education in Bolivia is one to which successive governments pay lip service to but never really entertain seriously. The principal reason is that the Agrarian Reform resulted in the ideological disappearance of the Indians. It was decreed that there were no longer Indians but campesinos, peasants. The idea was to create a homogeneous, mestizo but Spanish-speaking Bolivia. Any encouragement of Aymara ran counter to such an ideology. In recent years, principally through the wave of Aymara radio stations, the tide is slowly beginning to turn and there is a new awareness of Indian identity even though the impetus comes, not from the highland regions, but from the jungle areas (Albó 1991)

UNICEF is trying to operate a bilingual education programme in the various language areas in Bolivia (Aymara, Quechua and Guarani). Preliminary results lead ineluctably to the conclusion that bilingual education after three years leads to increased proficiency in all areas tested including Spanish compared to test schools (Sichra 1991). This is not so surprising when one can quite easily imagine the greater confidence obtained from learning to read in one's own language first and only then proceeding to learn a second language. This is supported by a study by USAID which contradicts the general assumption that classes conducted in Spanish would automatically result in non-Spanish-speaking students learning Spanish. What appears to be more likely to happen is that non-Spanish-speakers simply drop out of school (Hahn 1992:96).

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<sup>21</sup> See Harvey (1991) for a Peruvian account of the denigration of native language and culture in schools.

The teacher is a *q'ara par excellence*. He explicitly rejects much of Aymara culture and even perms his hair and wears track-suits to look less like an Indian; nevertheless, he is a respected member of the community.

This state of affairs causes some embarrassment and confusion. As a single man, the appropriate form of address is *wayna* but to do so to a person of respect would be insulting and therefore some people address him with the more respectful *tata*. The teacher and all he represents contradict the Pocabayeno basic system of beliefs about how one achieves status and respect in the community, his position as educated and empowered outsider independently accords him status and respect within the community.

There are some obvious parallels with the priest. He, too, is an unmarried outsider with views perhaps even more inimical to those of Pocabaya; both, however, are important representatives of the powerful metropolitan culture and are needed for Pocabayenos to deal with that culture. They are tolerated, even respected but they are never fully accepted. Although he is not a direct threat to village authority and traditional religion (as, say, represented by the *yatiri*), by providing different models of social organisation and stressing the values of metropolitan culture, he undermines the confidence Pocabayenos have in themselves and in their own culture.

## Adolescence

If childhood is noted for the lack of incorporation of the child into society where children are tolerated but largely ignored by adults, this is even more so the case with adolescence. Adolescents no longer need the basic attention they did as small children but are not yet incorporated into society as full adult human beings.

Childhood moves imperceptively into adolescence. The basic chore of the older child and adolescent is herding sheep or goats which keeps them away from the home all day. High in the hills the younger adolescents will play a variety of games with each other often modelled on the activities of adults.

The move from childhood to adolescence is publicly marked by the fact that the child no longer accompanies its parents to fiestas and communal events. This occurs more or less around the age of twelve or thirteen and from this point, until they are married, adolescents are usually not seen much in public events and then only peripherally (unless it involves their immediate family). Adolescence is a markedly

liminal stage in a Pocabayeno's life. In social terms they are between categories rather than consisting of a category of their own. Their peripheral status is accentuated by the fact that they typically spend most of their time herding livestock high in the mountains far away from the village or the fields where adult Pocabayenos work during the day. The herds are usually brought to their corrals long after most people have returned from the fields and the youths return home as darkness falls. Adolescents will often help their parents in agricultural labour but this is generally only the case when the nuclear family works as a single unit. It is relatively rare to see adolescents in a work party composed of more than one family.

As far as the community as a whole is concerned, adolescents are typically neither seen nor heard and this is true for most fiestas as much as for daily life. Adolescents are not allowed to drink or chew coca as this is quintessentially an adult activity and associated with communication with the tellurian spirits. Drinking is invariably done socially at some occasion or another and frequently accompanied by the chewing of coca. Both activities done socially are acts of communion with the tellurian spirits: "...alcohol contributes in uniting men with themselves as well as with spirits, gods or the dead (its use annuls the division between sacred and profane spheres" (Saignes 1989:104; see also Harvey 1991).

Similarly, coca chewing is also an act of communion with the spirits of below. Both activities are organised such that the alcohol or the coca is shared. Typically, the person doing the round with the alcohol takes a glass and offers it to all and finally pours himself a drink. Similarly, a man will chew only a little from his coca pouch (*ch'uspa*) and then pass it round. Women rarely chew coca although they will drink but generally not as much as the men.

In all these occasions of communal drinking (*umjasiña*), chewing (*akultasiña*) or eating (*wayq'asi*), adolescents are generally not present. Small children often are but, of course, do not participate in the way adults do. The importance of these three activities in terms of the communion of the people with each other and together with the spirits is quite clear: drinking and chewing and *wayq'asi* all involve the community of adults. In turn, they involve the community of spirits for which communal eating, drinking or chewing is an offering (*cf.* Allen 1988:137 *ff.*).

In the important fiestas, particularly the fiesta of Natividad in September adolescents will dance along with the adults. This is, however, not considered to be 'true' dancing which accounts for the fact that I was told on numerous occasions that

adolescents never danced in fiestas. As far as adults are concerned, since they do not drink, 'they only dance for simple enjoyment' (*kwirpuru kusiyaña*).<sup>22</sup> Dancing properly requires doing so under the influence of alcohol; it also comes under the category of communal activities which express communion or interaction with the tellurian spirits.

It is only with marriage and adulthood that this liminal stage is left behind and people once again integrated into the community. The rites and status of adulthood are brought all the more to the fore when contrasted with the isolation and ambiguity of adolescence.

## Adulthood

Adulthood, the process of becoming fully human, i.e., *jaqi*, is achieved through marriage and starting up one's own household.<sup>23</sup> Marriage is a principal part of *jaqichasiña*, the process of becoming a 'complete' human being. It is for this reason that newly-weds are referred to as the *machaq jaqi*, the new people. In other areas, they are called *machaq uta* (new household) (Mamani 1989:9). In either case the importance of marriage and the creation of a household as part of *jaqichasiña* is underlined.

In very recent times (the last ten years), however, military service for men has taken on the character of a rite of passage and part of *jaqichasiña* for men. Most men tell of the brutal experiences they have in the army, the constant punishment and the verbal racial abuse they get from the officers. It is a place where they learn quite clearly the position of the Aymara in contemporary Bolivian society if they have not yet done so. They are also made keenly aware that their language is depreciated and despised by the fact that its use is forbidden in the army.

Despite the hardship, the experience is valued as a maturing and broadening one where they see other parts of their country far from Pocabaya. An important part of army training is education in nationalist ideology and those who have completed their

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<sup>22</sup> *kwirpu.ru kusi.si.ya.ña*: *kwirpu* - body (Sp. *cuerpo*); *ru* - prepositional suffix 'to'; *kusi* - pleasure; *si* - reflexive; *ya* - to make; *ña* - infinitive. Thus, to enjoy oneself physically or, literally, to make oneself give joy to the body.

<sup>23</sup> A household is defined in Pocabaya as the people living together off land owned by one person.

military service all come back with their booklet of texts they have had to recite by heart about Bolivia, the flag, the nation, the integrity of national boundaries and so on. There are obvious parallels with what they started learning at school which is, after all, where they first learned to march.

The return is cause for great celebration where the young man is feted at a table framed with palm leaves and decorated with *awayus* (colourful carrying cloths). The communal meal, *wayq'asi*, is held and there is much drinking. The returned soldier is very quickly drunk and remains so for several days along with those men who wish to accompany him.

## Marriage

On his return from the army, a young man is expected to start looking for a wife. Marriage in Pocabaya is a process in much the same way as life is seen as a process, a *thaki*. Marriage begins with public cohabiting and proceeds through various stages of producing children, building a house, inheriting land, a civil wedding, a church wedding and undertaking the sponsorship of fiestas.

Both men and women enter into a union in their early twenties although it is often the case that the woman is a couple of years younger. Pocabaya itself is 83% endogamous but if one includes the neighbouring hamlets of Thana and Tikata in a single unit (as indeed they once were) then marriage could be seen to be as 93% endogamous. There were only four cases of marriage beyond the boundaries of Pocabaya, Thana and Tikata: two with someone from the village of Ch'exe, the nearest village to Pocabaya; and one case each with someone from the villages of Waycha and Kusimani, both quite close to Pocabaya in the direction of the altiplano where Pocabayenos go to exchange maize for potatoes quite regularly when the potato crop has all been consumed.<sup>24</sup> In the vast majority of cases, then, Pocabayenos marry people they have known all their lives.

The basic marriage rule is that one can marry anyone beyond the level of first cousin. This rule is, however, broken. The only marriage to occur in Pocabaya when

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<sup>24</sup> This data was collected from all the married couples of Pocabaya at the time of my fieldwork and includes marriages going as far back as the nineteen forties. I have no exact data concerning changing patterns over time but one of the oldest women in Pocabaya (in her eighties) reported to me that in the past there was much more general contact with other villages over the mountains and that in her youth people in the area married from a much wider area.

I was there was in fact between first cousins. There was apparently much criticism when the couple started to cohabit, but as so often seems to be the case in Pocabaya, over time people more or less grew to accept the situation. The situation was explained to me with some humour as if it were merely a curious fact that the couple were cousins.<sup>25</sup>

If a woman becomes pregnant outside a formal relationship, that is, one publicly recognised, she may have difficulty getting the father to take responsibility for the child. If his identity is known, then she has recourse to the **corregidor** in the cantonal capital, Ilabaya, who can oblige him to take responsibility of the child. A simple accusation can be denied and the mother may wish to conceal the identity of the father for a variety of reasons, such as in the case of incest. In such instances, abortion is not uncommon (even for an unwanted pregnancy within marriage). There are several herbal abortifacients which can be used, although the pharmacist in Sorata is not unsympathetic and is known to prescribe abortifacients to pregnant women.

There are occasions where an unmarried woman will decide to keep the baby but whether or not she will stay in Pocabaya depends on the willingness of her parents to support both of them.<sup>26</sup> There were two such women living in Pocabaya when I was there and although they were subject to some criticism when it was discovered that they were pregnant, the community seemed to forget the situation quite quickly and was soon treating the women normally and even supportively. A single mother's desirability as a marriage partner is somewhat reduced as few men want the financial responsibility of a child immediately upon marriage. Nevertheless, given that the choice of marriage partners is generally restricted to those who are not first cousins and that there is sooner or later going to be a young widower who will be in a better position to support her, the chances of a single mother finding a husband are not entirely unreasonable. The one case of a single woman becoming pregnant in Pocabaya when I was there was treated with pity for her plight, but with no obvious hostility or ridicule as appears to be the case in Irpa Chico (Carter and Mamani 1982).

The normal state of affairs is that a couple will start courting (they may or may not have sexual relations) and typically during a fiesta the man will take her home to his

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<sup>25</sup> Arnold (1989:198) notes the reduction of the extent of incest categories from a five-generational one to a three-generational one within living memory. In Pocabaya the process appears to have gone further as even marriage can occur between first cousins with impunity.

<sup>26</sup> It is, nevertheless, not the case as in Irpa Chico that she will be ostracised from the community (Carter & Mamani 1982:193).

parents' house. This is rarely a surprise to anyone but everyone pretends that it is. Her parents in particular will often be hysterically angry and will have to be calmed down by his parents with the offer of food or other goods. I know of at least one case, though, where there was no such antagonism between the parents and the whole situation was organised calmly and rationally. The young woman will take up residence with his parents and this marks the first stage of marriage. The relationship can be broken off at this stage with little damage to the reputation of either although it is generally disapproved of, and seen to entail fickleness. Matters become more serious when the couple occupy their own section of the house or one of their own.

Once the couple officially sets up house and is seen publicly to be living together, they may refer to each other as *uñt'ata* which literally means s/he who is known to one. In most cases, this living together (*payan jakisiña*<sup>27</sup>) lasts for a couple of years although it can be for much longer. It is generally considered appropriate to go through a legal wedding after the birth of the first child. If the couple wishes to break up they may but the man will have exactly the same responsibilities towards the children of such a union as he would have had he been legally married. Once children are born, the reason for not getting married may be that his father has not yet given him any land or that they are still saving up for the wedding or that the appropriate *padrinos* have not been found.

The civil wedding takes place in the registry office of the cantonal capital of Ilabaya and is sponsored by two *padrinos*. The couple is accompanied back to Pocobaya by those who attended the wedding but when they cross the border between Thana and Pocobaya, they are escorted by young men riding mules or horses. Since Pocabayenos are not accustomed to riding and the horses are not accustomed to being ridden, the riders often fall off much to the amusement of everyone. The couple is feted in the plaza with their respective kin under arches of *suqhosa* leaves covering a table decorated with *awayus*. This structure of leaves is known as a *kawiltu* and is the way to honour people ritually. All the women will be under one *kawiltu*, and all the men under the other. Around them a *wayq'asi*, a communal meal, will be held and much food and drink will be brought to them, much in the same way as the returning soldier (above).

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<sup>27</sup> *paya.ni jaka.si.ña* : *paya* means two and with the added personalising suffix *ni* means two people (the final *i* is elided in this case). *Jaka* means life, *si* is a reflexive and *ña* marks the infinitive. Thus literally: two people living together.

The couple may go to Sorata to have a church wedding or, alternatively, wait for the priest's biannual visit and have it done then. Quite a few do not bother with a Catholic wedding at all because they either have to attend instruction in Sorata or the priest will ask them awkward and personal questions in Pocabaya.

The issue as to whether or not there is such a thing as trial marriage among the Aymara has been discussed by Carter (1977). He sees marriage as a series of rites rather than the one rite of which it traditionally consists in Western culture, and that to describe it as trial marriage is ethnocentric. Albó similarly reinforces this interpretation for the area of Omasuyos and Ingavi.<sup>28</sup> It is imprecise, he says, to speak of trial marriage, because what really happens is a long series of stages which seal, each time more firmly, the mutual obligation of a couple and bestows recognition from the members of the community onto the new autonomous family unit (Albó 1976:4).

The situation in Pocabaya would seem to confirm these interpretations. The marital unit, the *chachawarmi*, is the fulcrum of all social relations in Pocabaya and indeed the basis, both ideological and in practice, of social organisation. That the incorporation of such an important unit into society should take time is not surprising especially when considering the series of social obligations the couple enter into. Not only do they have obligations to their respective parents, but also to siblings, the baptismal godparents of their children, the godparents of their wedding and finally as householders to the community as a whole. Both families enter into a web of long-term *ayni* relations (the reciprocal exchange of like for like) (see also Arnold 1989:303). One can see the mock hostility of the respective parents as a recognition by both sides that the marriage joins two potentially antagonistic groups and that the union must be carefully considered.

There are, however, clear elements in the unions of Pocabaya of a trial union, at least at the beginning. The longer the process continues, the more difficult it is to leave the relationship, especially if there are children. In Pocabaya the trial period, that is, the period in which the couples can separate easily and without too much prejudice against their reputations, is probably no more than a couple of months. Both men and women overtly see the first couple of months as a trial period. It is a period when they may assess legitimately the qualities of their partner (*yant'aña*). The majority of couples pass through this stage and continue to the full marriage. There are several cases, however,

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<sup>28</sup> These are the two altiplano provinces adjacent to Larecaja.

when because of antagonism on the part of the in-laws against the girl or because her parents refuse to accept him, or (more rarely, it seems) they simply don't get on, the couple does break up. One man did this no less than three times before he finally settled down, citing his mother's hostility to his girlfriends as the reason. Three times would be normally considered excessive and he was much criticised at the time; he is now, however, a very respected member of the community.

That marriage is the most important rite of passage for individuals and matrimony the central institution of the path of life, the making of a human being (*jaqichasiña*), is quite clear. One must, however, keep in mind that the process of socialisation and incorporation started many years before and continues many years after. Even taken as occurring over a period of several years, from consensual union to formal marriage, one should not consider the process as discrete. Marriage is an essential element in *thaki* and *jaqichasiña*, but must be seen in the wider context of the whole process of socialisation and incorporation.

Marriage, in fact, continues to develop over time as the couple matures and takes on more and more social responsibilities such as godchildren, *cargos*, community offices, and the sponsorship of fiestas. In a very important sense, then, the wedding process, tied so intimately as it is to the notion of personal social development, never really finishes until the individuals are too old and decrepit to take a full part in communal affairs. Similarly, it must be seen as a part of a lengthy process of maturation and socialisation which begins with the simple naming ceremony of the infant.

## Households

Even with the church wedding the wedding is not quite over. Until the couple has land they do not have voting rights in the village council and it may be the case that a father will delay giving his sons land for some years. Alternatively, he may do so when the couple starts living together. Retaining the land is one way a father ensures control over his sons and some use this power more than others. If a young man is lucky, he may even receive a piece of land from his *pärinu* (godfather). Half the land in Pocabaya is communally owned but a householder can not lay claim to his share of the communal land until he owns land privately.

There are fifty-four households in Pocabaya, the composition of which varies greatly as one goes through the life-cycle of the members of the household. The development of a household may begin with a young couple with no children. As the family matures, the household may include five or six children and perhaps an elderly parent who can no longer farm his or her own land. As the sons get married the home will be expanded to provide each new family with its own independent house although, they will likely share a courtyard. The largest household in Pocabaya includes an elderly couple, a very elderly parent, three married adult sons (who have yet to inherit land) and their five children as well as an unmarried daughter. Another household includes a couple in their forties and their ten children.

Once the sons start to inherit land, they will build a house away from their parents and start their own households. As the children move away, the couple become once again alone. Finally one of them dies and the remaining partner will continue to farm what remains of the land as best as s/he can until finally s/he can no longer do so and must be taken care of by one of the children.

Of the fifty-four households in Pocabaya, six are single person households (four widowers and two widows). Of the other widows and widowers, who have not yet remarried, three have but one child, two have two children each and one has six children living at home. There are also four elderly couples living alone without any children. Thus of the fifty-four households, thirteen are households of one or two people. There is no case of a young couple with no children who also have land to qualify them as householders; most households already include four or five people when they start out.

Once a **chachawarmi** (couple) owns land and forms a household, it can start assuming the **cargos** of the village. They can sponsor fiestas and be **padrinos** and continue along the way to achieving the ideal of **suma jaqi**. Before he even gets married, a man will go off to work in the mines or in the rice fields in the **yungas** to support the family and to have the extra cash needed to sponsor fiestas.

## Cargos

With the revolution of 1952 the villages were unionised. The traditional organisation was replaced by a village union headed by a Secretary General, his deputy, a Secretary for Justice and host of other positions of no practical significance other than

giving people the opportunity to have **cargos**, community offices, without doing anything. One other position is the **jilaqata** of the school who has the responsibility of taking care of the teacher in general and carrying his luggage to and from the road.

These **cargos** rotate every year. The officers are decided in the village meeting at the end of the calendar year. This is quite a long process as most people want neither the economic burden nor the responsibility. Some, on the other hand, will put themselves forward since, as one man told me, it is much better to be seen to take on the **cargo** willingly than to be obligated to do it. Sooner or later all the **cargos** go through all the men in the village.

The three most important **cargos** are the offices of **Secretario General**, **Relación** and **Justicia**. These titles come from the standard union offices, but in effect a leader is elected along with two deputies who will help him share the responsibilities and decisions. Apart from being the maximal formal authorities in the village, the three are responsible for representing the village to the outside. This was important in the past when the community was involved in legal disputes with the **haciendado**. In election years the **Secretario General** will receive quantities of goods from the various campaigning parties which he is supposed to redistribute within the community. During the last election the incumbent distributed hardly anything at all and sold most of what he had received from the political parties for his own profit, much to the annoyance of the rest of the community.

One of the principle duties of the **Secretario General** is to deal with disputes such as land and marital disputes. He also organises communal work days to fix the path to Sorata after a heavy rain, or to repair the water system. It can at times be quite a thankless task. On one occasion, a young couple came to **Secretario General** to settle their separation. He did so and they both left apparently satisfied. Some time later, however, the young man went to Sorata to complain that he was not satisfied with the terms of the separation and wanted another arrangement. The police summoned the **Secretario General** and arrested him for acting *extra jure*. They put the hapless man in prison for two days and fined him 150 pesos bolivianos (about £50).

With the unionisation of village authority in the 1950s, the office of **jilaqata** was replaced by that of the **Secretario General** and as a consequence, the **Secretario General** has duties beyond those outlined by the union rules. This development generally works efficiently until someone pleads to the authorities beyond the village who, as in this case, resent what they see as the usurpation of authority.

It appears that on the altiplano, the **chachawarmi** is seen to take on the **cargo** (Albó personal communication). There, if the Secretary General were to die, his wife would take on the duties. This is not the case in Pocabaya where in such a case the deputy takes over the duties and responsibilities. Women seem to have less of a role to play in the formal authority structure of village life than they appear to do in other areas.

This is less the case with **fiesta cargos**. The village fiesta on the 7th of September (Natividad) is sponsored by a couple (not always willingly) who mobilise their resources and that of their **compadres** and **padrinos** to provide for the fiesta. This couple, known as the **prestes** are usually chosen from among the wealthier peasants and are responsible for providing the food for all the villagers and guests. The **kawisa** (Sp. *cabeza* - head) is generally a younger man and is in charge of organising and paying for the band which will come and play at the fiesta. He and his wife are also responsible for the food on the second day of the fiesta. Both the **prestes** and the **kawisa** and his wife will be feted at the fiesta by the presentation of a pumpkin impaled with sticks holding two peso notes. **Awayus** are placed around their shoulders and the community dances around them.

There are two dance groups each with its leader, **irpiri**, who will organise the costumes and take care of the musicians, which basically involves ensuring they have plenty to drink. The first group is of the **jilir jaqi**, the elders of the community; the second is the **wayna pwinta**, which consists of younger married couples and a few unmarried people who are generally well into marriageable age. Throughout the days of the fiesta people may join one or other of the dance groups.

One last **cargo** is that of the **jilaqata**. The **jilaqata** was the traditional leader of the community but his office has now been totally superseded by that of the **Secretario General**. The term is now reserved for the school **cargo**. The **jilaqata** now simply takes care of the schoolmaster and sponsors the school fiesta in May.

The execution of **cargos** and the sponsoring of fiestas is an essential element of the **thaki**, the process of life by which one becomes a complete person. One, in fact, does not become a whole person until the **cargos** are completed (Bastien 1978:62). As we have seen, though, this traditional system is dependent on resources from the outside to maintain it. This outside system has a very different ethos of wealth than the one within the community, and has a model of exchange quite antithetical to that of the moral community of villagers. The resources for the fiestas come from a capitalist system which stresses wealth accumulation and investment. In contrast, in the village accumulation of wealth is considered unseemly, and an enormous amount of pressure will

be put on a man who has had a good year in the mines to sponsor a fiesta or give more to his *padrinos*. There is no resolution to this antinomy and if a man wants to accumulate his wealth he must quite simply leave the village and the moral community of the villagers.

## Death

Unlike modern Western societies, mortality rates are high in villages such as Pocabaya. According to health workers, tuberculosis (*tisiq usu*) is the most common cause of death in adults, and diarrhoea among children. It is, however, difficult to establish the cause of death since the most common answer given is "She died of an illness" or "He died of a bad heart". Heart in this case refers to the *chuyma*, which is the life force that every living thing possesses. In my first year in Pocabaya (the calendar year 1990) there were fourteen deaths in a population of two hundred and twenty. Three of these were due to drowning caused by flash floods; five were infants and the rest were mature or older adults. In the same year six children were born. It was, to be sure, an unusually morbid year but not, apparently, remarkably so.

Pocabayenos for the most part take death in their stride. Generally when a death occurs, all the adults of the village, accompanied by small children, go to the house to pay their respects. The corpse is dressed in his/her best clothes and laid on a bed with candles by the head; a man will have his *ch'uspa* (coca pouch) around his neck. The candles burn all night and the body is accompanied until the funeral. Men who come to pay their respects arrive with a flask of alcohol and their coca pouch. As they enter the darkened room, visitors will greet all present and offer a libation to the deceased. Fictive and real kin will stay with the corpse, drinking and chewing coca, until the morning.

The cause of death is always, by definition, that the deceased's *ajayu* (spirit) has left him. The departure of one's *ajayu* is the cause of illness and, ultimately, the cause of death. Illness is cured by the *yatiri* who persuades the *ajayu* to return to the body. It is also important to do this after death so that the *ajayu* does not wander forever and menace people. Normally the *ajayu* comes of his own accord, even if the room is full of people, but in a violent death the *ajayu* may be disoriented and the deceased should be surrounded by his personal effects (a photograph is said to be particularly effective) and those present call on the *ajayu* to return. Despite this, there is the belief that the

ghost of the dead lingers for a couple of weeks and people are afraid to go out alone, especially after dark.

The following morning the villagers once again assemble at the deceased's house where they are given several bowls of soup by the family of the deceased. Most of the men are quite drunk and several of them will start building the coffin.

When all the eating is done *inkuñas* (small woven cloths) are brought out and opened. The men, one by one, go over to the opened *inkuña* and, making the sign of the cross (*sext'asiña*) over the coca leaves and cigarettes, take some to chew and smoke. After all the men have been given some coca and a cigarette, an elder will invite everyone to pray. All the men stand up and take off their hats and pray at the end of which they all thank each other.

By this time the coffin is ready and is transported to the cemetery without ceremony and without the body. The body is strapped to two poles in the front of a stretcher (*kallapu*). At this point all the men are drunk and often the body is not tied on properly and falls to the ground to the distress of the family present. The *kallapu* is carried by pall-bearers a pair at a time. The pallbearers have sweet-smelling *rhutu* leaves up their noses so that the spirit will not enter their bodies by that route. That is the principal reason stated although it may have something to do with avoiding the smell of the body even though it is rare in such a dry and cool climate for the corpse to have significantly decomposed at this stage. As the pall-bearers run they will occasionally turn the stretcher round 180 degrees so that the deceased's *ajayu* will not be able to find his way back from the grave. This does not occur at any particular place and is determined rather by available space and the time since the last revolution of the stretcher (cf. Harris 1982a:51). The stretcher is turned at more or less regular intervals.

At the cemetery the drinking continues and the grave is dug. The site of the grave is any suitable clear place in the small cemetery and it is irrelevant if someone else is dug up. In fact, this almost always happens but seems to disturb no one. On one occasion a remains of a small child was violently dug up, which produced an animated discussion upon the identity of the corpse.

Whilst all this is happening, the corpse is laying next to the coffin, totally unattended. It is quite normal at this stage for arguments and fights to break out. Someone, for example, may take the hammer and refuse to give it back because he says the deceased is wearing his shirt; the deceased's brother on one occasion accused someone of having caused the death through witchcraft, and then overturned the corpse

to curse the accused. Men will start fighting for no apparent reason. These incidents are very common and it may be an expression of shock at the loss of one of their own. Most people, though, show no public emotional expression of grief at all apart from when the body is lain in the grave. This lasts for just a few seconds.

Sooner or later, the arguments are settled and the coffin is closed but not before placing in it a bottle of water, a bottle of *k'usa* (maize beer), and a sack of food. The sack usually contains potatoes and other tubers, as well as three types of maize: **muchu tunku**, **jampi tunku** and **chiwita**. These are for eating, for making toasted maize, and for making *k'usa*. Sometimes money is also included. Before the coffin is closed an arm of the corpse is sometimes exposed and a number of people come to ask favours of the deceased. Some ask the dead to communicate with recently deceased relatives, others place written notes in the hand of the corpse for their loved ones. On one occasion an infertile woman asked the deceased to assist her in having children.<sup>29</sup>

The coffin is buried in the grave. The few skeletons unearthed are laid aside and there is sometimes speculation as to who it may be and the bones are reburied with the coffin. On top of the grave, a **nichu** (*cf.* Sp. *nicho*, niche), an adobe structure with a niche for flowers is built with adobes to mark the grave. A cross is put in the direction of the sunrise marked with the name and dates of the deceased. Alternatively, no grave is dug and the coffin is placed in the top chamber of someone else's tomb, leaving the grave and tomb to be dug and built the following week.

The whole village walks back to the deceased's house but before entering the village, all stop to drink, smoke, and chew. Once at the house mutton broth is served with certain leaves said to be effective against the malignant spirit of the dead, notably **rhutu**. The rest of the evening is spent drinking and a group will continue drinking well into the next day and beyond. On the night of the burial people are afraid to go around at night, especially alone, for fear of the spirit of the dead which is considered to be malignant however friendly the person was in life. In its frustration and confusion at being dead the spirit may attack anyone and cause the victim's **ajayu** to leave his or her body.

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<sup>29</sup> It is not the case in Pocobaya as with the Laymi that the dead are considered to be particularly inimical to women of childbearing age (*cf.* Harris 1982a:65).

The place where three men were drowned in a flash flood in 1990 is considered to be particularly dangerous. Not only are the three spirits of the men still believed to be malevolently present (even though two were properly buried - the other was never found), but the geographical configuration of the area in itself is inauspicious: it is barren, dry, and rocky, away from any inhabitation, and near water. It is in these places far from the human habitation and impossible to cultivate or graze animals, that is, beyond the civilising or domesticating capacity of humans, that the evil spirits, or **saxra**, are said to dwell. The fear of the recently dead is quite real and is taken very seriously indeed.

## Uchuria

Eight days after the funeral the immediate family goes to Sorata to have a mass said for the soul (**alma**) by the priest. This day is called **uchuria** from the Spanish for eight days (*ochos dias*). The deceased's clothes are lain before the altar along with some flowers and the priest blesses these at the end of the mass.

The party slowly makes their way back to Pocabaya which, since the party usually includes older people, often takes as much as six hours. On arrival, a stick of dynamite will be set off to announce the arrival and expel any malingering evil spirits. Another group of people will have finished off the tomb, of adobe bricks and corrugated iron whilst the other group was in Sorata. The degree of elaboration of the tomb depends entirely on the will of the family and friends of the deceased and may actually be left at just a mound of earth with a cross. The cross contains the name, date of birth and death and the letters, Q.E.P.D. which stand for the Spanish words, Que En Paz Descanse (May s/he rest in peace).

At the house of the deceased all the adults congregate and share the soup and potatoes which all the married women bring. After everyone has finished eating, the **inkuña** of cigarettes and coca is brought out. Once again the men come forward, make the sign of the cross and take some leaves and cigarettes. A prayer is said and all the men thank each other.

Once a person is dead, s/he no longer has the personality s/he had when living. A very decent and kind person will still be malevolent when s/he is dead and in turn a wicked person can still help from the beyond. Eventually the dead are transformed into **achachilas**. The mechanism by which a defunct person's soul eventually gets to inhabit

mountains and crags could not be explained to me. The dispatch of the dead is thus extremely important and must be carried out properly. The dead are formally mourned at All Saints for three years after the death. It is curious to contrast the lack of consideration to the moribund but the importance they assume when they are dead. This importance, and its connection to fertility, can already be seen in the power a dead person's hand has to grant favours and fertility.

For those Pocabayenos who reach adulthood, death comes in their fifties or early sixties. It is, nevertheless, relatively common for people to die in the prime of life, in their thirties and forties, from a variety of illness that plague rural Bolivia, notably tuberculosis and silicosis from the mines. If the widow(er) is young enough, s/he will generally be expected to remarry. There are seven such marriages in Pocabaya. Women generally must be of child-bearing age or marry a widower. To be widowed in one's forties and be alone for the rest of one's life is one of the worse fates to fall upon a man or woman: it is both lonely and economically difficult. The community recognises this situation and will try and match people up.<sup>30</sup> To be single in the prime of one's life is a great anomaly in a culture built around **chachawarmi**, the married couple.

In re-joining the forces of the tellurian **Manqhapacha**, the dead become part of that matrix even though they will lose their individual identities. Skulls will be dug up from the cemetery to influence the amount of rain that falls in the belief that the skulls will affect the decisions of the **achachilas**, and the dead will become intimately involved in the daily lives of the living as **achachilas**. Similarly, a **ch'amakani** (shaman) will use a skull (**riwutu**) to communicate with the forces of below. Over time, and anonymously, the dead become part of the general force of **achachilas** and thus ends the **thaki**: the process goes from an unsocialised, barely human baby, to a socialised, complete adult of **chachawarmi** and further to join the ranks of the incorporeal **achachilas** who provide rain and fertility.

A central part of **thakix** is the progressive integration into the community, a progressive socialisation from naming, to marriage, to the adoption of cargos and finally death. After death, the individual is truly socialised, for s/he becomes part of the apotheosis of community spirit, that is, the tutelary deities, the **achachilas**. As an **achachila**, although powerful, the Pocabayeno has no personal identity at all and this fact

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<sup>30</sup> See chapter 4 for an example of this.

clearly underlines the intensely communitarian ethos of life in Pocabaya. It is this communitarian ethos which we now turn to examine.

# Chapter III

## The Pocabaya Community

The Pocabaya community is defined by the land on which Pocabayenos work and live together. The land of Pocabaya is not simply something that is owned in common, for Pocabayenos' relation to the land is not just an economic one. All fertility comes from the **Pachamama**, the personification of the earth matrix. As such, people are in a similar relationship to the land, **pacha**, as the crops they grow and the animals they rear. The **Pachamama** is however a generalised phenomenon. Much more specific to the land are the **achachilas**. The achachilas are the tutelary spirits of the land responsible for rain. They are also the ancestors of Pocabayenos who named the land and every feature on it. They are the moral guardians of the community, they are the source of legitimisation with respect to the occupation and productive relationship with the land. In the previous chapter we saw how Pocabayenos come from the **Manqhapacha**, the spatio-temporal sphere in which the **Pachamama** and **achachilas** reside, and eventually return to it in the form of **achachilas**. In this context, **achachilas** are not individualised but are perceived of as an amorphous group that oversees the community.

The individual's relationship with the community is then paramount for Pocabayenos for they are not only defined as a community through their relationship with the **achachilas**, the **Pachamama**, and the land as a group; but are also defined as human beings through these relationships. The process of life, the **thaki**, is the increased socialisation of peoples to the community until they finally become **achachilas**. As a result, community identity is very strong and explicitly stated as being important and desirable.

There are, however, countervailing tendencies to group cohesion and identity. Albó has pointed out (Albó 1975) that a central paradox of Aymara society is that it is simultaneously solidary and factionalist. Limiting ourselves only to Pocabaya, we can examine how there is a constant dynamic of centrifugal and centripetal forces at play. Some of these forces can be described as structural: the tendency, for example, to see the

basic social unit as the household rather than the community. There is consequently a constant tension between the needs of individual households and those of the community. The strength of the household versus the community waxes and wanes throughout the year and there are even times when the interests of both coincide but even then there is a tension between the community, the household and even the individual. Another source of countervailing pressure comes from the world beyond Pocabaya, an economic, social and ecological environment which undermines the community. The community must survive on increasingly less productive land and exists in a larger society which, historically as well as contemporarily, has treated Aymaras with prejudice and violence.

In this chapter I will outline the relationships and institutions which are conducive to community cohesion and identity: communal labour, fiestas and relations with the supernatural forces of the **Manqhapacha** as a group. These will be contrasted with elements that stress the atomisation of the community, elements principally rooted in the bounded household. We will also see a community closing in on itself as shown by fears of witchcraft and apparently rising rates of endogamy.

## Communal Pocabaya

The Aymara...lives submerged in his primary groups: the family and the community. He can barely take decisions, or organise his work, or enjoy himself, or pray, without reference to those groups to which he belongs; Even his individualism, from which, as a human being, he is not exempt, is manifested principally as a community egoism, an egoism of the group.

(Albó 1985:8)

These words clearly express how an Aymara individual is rooted in his/her consciousness in the group. This is seen in the sharing of land, the reciprocity of labour, the solidarity expressed in fiestas, funerals, etc., and, above all, in the sense of being in a relationship with the tellurian spirits as a group. There is also the element of group identity seen in the background of centuries of oppression that creates a sense of security and peace in a surrounding space of suspicion, hostility and even malevolence.

I first arrived in Pocabaya with the intention of walking on through the mountains for a further two weeks. Several Pocabayenos expressed horror and concern that I should venture into the mountains alone. I was taken up the high mountain where I had

a good view of the area in which I intended to travel. Many of the villages I was to pass through were clearly visible. One by one the villages were pointed out and named to me. I was told how evil the people were who lived around Pocabaya and my route was mapped out to me in terms of the nefarious activities of the villages I would pass. They were not only mean and unfriendly, they would rob me, kill me, steal my body fat, and even eat me. This was said in all seriousness and such comments were repeated to me on different occasions during my stay there. I realised that the vast majority of Pocabayenos never ventured into those areas. They passed through villages on the route to Lake Titicaca but had no occasion to go to others that were as near as three hours' walk. The hostility and fear that was expressed in relation to neighbouring communities was contrasted by Pocabayenos with their own openness and friendliness.

This phenomenon has been widely noted<sup>1</sup> and illustrates simultaneously the identity with and loyalty to an individual has to his/her village as well as the mistrust for outsiders. This has been described as cultural flexibility in the face of a hostile environment (Carter 1971:88) and as a "refined form of biculturalism characterised by defence mechanisms which allow a person to apply one set of rules for contacts with outsiders and another set in relation to kinsmen (Johnsson 1986:60)."

The suspicion Pocabayenos have for outsiders is quite understandable and even justified when one considers the centuries of oppression from outsiders of all kinds who time and time again have exploited them and taken their land (*cf.* Isbell 1978:21 and chapter 1). It is hardly surprising then that they show a certain animosity to people with whom they do not have established relationships. The dispute over land with the neighbouring village of Thana resulted in bloodshed on many occasions in living memory and it was not until the late 1970s that the litigation with the **ex-haciendado** was finally laid to rest.

When Pocabayenos leave their village they genuinely enter into a hostile environment of people and processes which they either do not fully understand or result in them being cheated, disadvantaged, or humiliated. This is not always the case but nevertheless, the perception that one is only truly secure in the community is very strong. Pocabaya is, after all, where most Pocabayenos are born, grow up, get married and die.

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Miracle and Yapita (1981:47) and Johnsson (1986:59). See also Isbell (1978).

The community is not only a framework for placing oneself in a wider context, it is part of one's individual identity and personality (*cf.* Miracle & Yapita 1981:47).

The mistrust for Aymaras from neighbouring villages is rarely translated into overt hostile behaviour, however. When people arrive from villages with which Pocabayenos do not have a traditional or kinship relation they are treated with courtesy and respect even though this may include a degree of circumspection. For example, itinerant milliners from the **altiplano** will occasionally arrive in Pocabaya; they will be given a room in which to stay (the spare room next to the school) and, occasionally, food.

When other outsiders such as the school teacher arrive, they are feted in the appropriate manner with beer and a **wayq'asi**, a communal meal, and greeted by the whole community. The priest, however, is only greeted by the **Secretario General** and it is to the latter's house that the priest momentarily retires after conducting a service.

The sense of community vis-à-vis outsiders is most clearly expressed on those occasions when Pocabayenos are in a group away from the village. A couple of months after I had settled in Pocabaya I was with several Pocabayenos in the Sunday market of Sorata. We were waiting in front of the church when a man (an Aymara) came up to me and asked me what I was doing with these people. When I replied that I lived with them he let out a loud guffaw and proceeded to insult me in Aymara. No sooner had he done this when a Pocabayena, Phlura, hurled a stream of invective against this man to the effect that I spoke excellent Aymara (hardly the case at the time); I had a **compadre** in Pocabaya; I walked with them and I worked in the fields like everyone else in Pocabaya, so he should take care if he was going to insult me. Phlura's comments were supported by all those there and the man, who was almost as surprised as I, sheepishly and respectfully apologised to all of us.

This incident illustrates not only the defence of someone who, publicly at least, was one of them, but also the emblems of membership in the group. Firstly, the fact that I spoke some Aymara set me apart from **mestizos** and whites who could not speak Aymara at all. Secondly, my kinship (**compadrazgo**) with someone in Pocabaya was essential to my acceptance within the community. Had I not had a **compadre** in Pocabaya, my presence there would have been anomalous and possibly dangerous. The point that I 'walked' with them and worked in the fields of Pocabaya are emblems of being a part of the moral community. Nothing brought greater approval than the fact that I worked the land with my **compadre** and that I walked the path to Pocabaya with a

heavy load and did not ask anyone to help me as would have been expected of a foreigner.

## From Ayllu to Comunidad

The traditional form of community for the Aymaras was the **ayllu**. An **ayllu** was a group of interrelated families who held land in common. This land was frequently not contiguous and allowed the group to maximise ecological resources (cf. Murra 1975; Harris 1982b). They varied in size but spanned considerable distances occupying a range of ecological zones. This type of archipelago settlement pattern (Murra *op.cit*) was typical of **ayllu** organisation.

**Ayllu** organisation existed in the Pocabaya area but is now defunct, although Tschopik reported some attenuated type of **ayllu** organisation in the altiplano as recently as fifty years ago (Tschopik 1946). In Inca times the **ayllu** was a much larger unit than that which survived into this century and continues to operate in some parts of southern Bolivia. After the arrival of the Spanish, **ayllus** were progressively reduced in size and the access to other areas was broken (cf. Wachtel 1977). Nevertheless, Aymaras did not lose sight of the benefits of maintaining links with other groups from different ecological niches can be seen from Pocabayeno's relations with the people from the altiplano (see chapter 1).

The **ayllu** system seen by Tschopik in the 1940s was defined by a clearly delimited area of semi-communal land which was redistributed according to need defined by family size. The leader of the **ayllu**, the **jilaqata**, was in charge of land redistribution as well as making decisions about crop rotation and irrigation. He received a share of the crops from the other **ayllu** members and was also the member of the group who most dealt with outsiders. Unlike the **curacas** of old, the **jilaqata** was elected annually and so could not amass power and wealth.

With the division of the lands into individual family units during colonial times but more extensively in Republican times (in order to loosen the Indians' grip on their land) the **ayllu** was no longer bound together by common landholdings. With the spread of the haciendas in the nineteenth century, many **ayllus** were swallowed up and ceased to function as independent units. The unity of the **ayllu**, according to Lewellen (1978) was maintained by a fiesta system. He suggests that the economic burden of these **ayllu**-

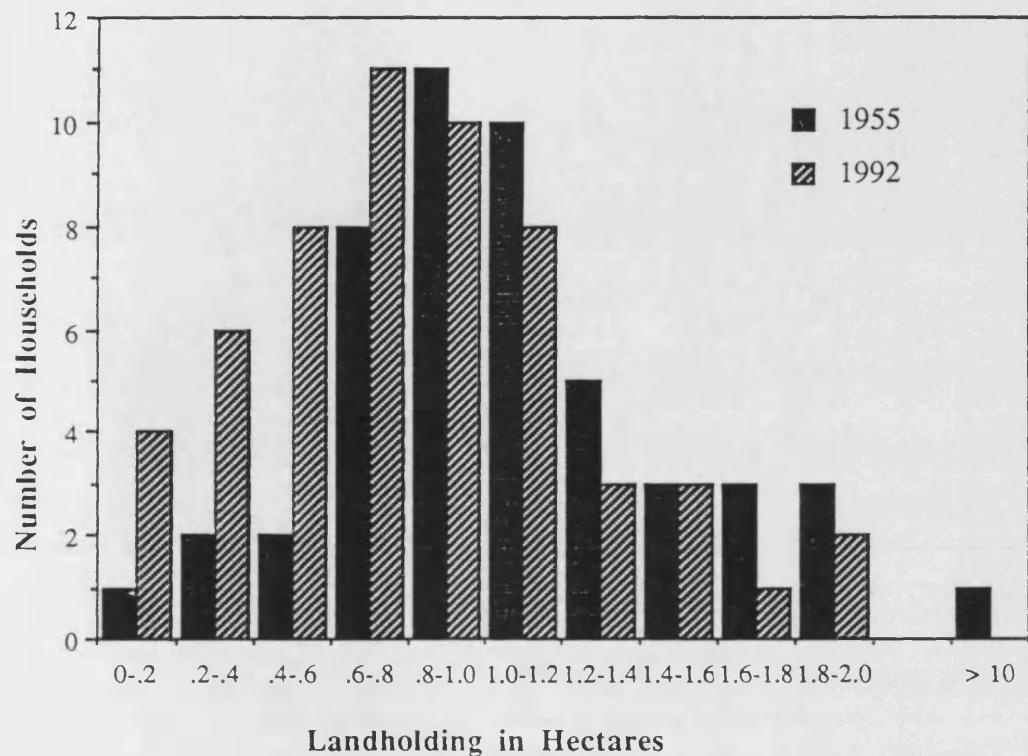
wide fiestas was the reason for their collapse in the area around lake Titicaca (*ibid*:77). The **ayllu** organisation of the type described by Tschopik survived in a few much-reduced free communities in the area of Pocabaya until the nineteen fifties when the new syndicalist model of organisation was adopted by free and ex-hacienda communities alike (see chapter 1).

Despite the fact that the **ayllu** is long defunct in Pocabaya and the word has no meaning for them, there are several elements to the idea of community that follow the basic **ayllu** model. Above all, Pocabayenos are united by the common ownership of land as well as by the fiestas they have together.

Each household has its own agricultural land which is passed on from generation to generation and is known as **sayaña**. This private ownership of land in turn entitles the households to equal shares of communal land. There is a total of 55 hectares of private land in Pocabaya, owned by 53 households. The average household **sayaña** is therefore just under one hectare but there is significant variation between households. Figure 6 shows the distribution of **sayaña** in Pocabaya in 1955 and in 1992. The relatively large number of small plots is largely, but not exclusively, accounted for by the fact that older people, especially widows, give most of their land away to their children leaving just enough for themselves to survive. There is consequently a strong correspondence between small households and small **sayañas** the life-cycle of the household is thus reflected in the distribution of land. The greater number of very small plots in 1992 shown in Figure 6 may be due to the fact that there are simply more older people in Pocabaya now than there used to be. A significantly greater proportion of the very small plots in 1955 were of people in their thirties and forties whereas in contemporary Pocabaya these are almost all accounted for by older people. An alternative reason may be that Pocabayenos are holding on to their land longer than they used to. I have, however, no data to support this hypothesis. Similarly, although there is data from cadastral surveys (**padrones**) since the 1880s which provide the ages of Pocabayenos who own land, the data is too inaccurate to be considered seriously.<sup>2</sup>

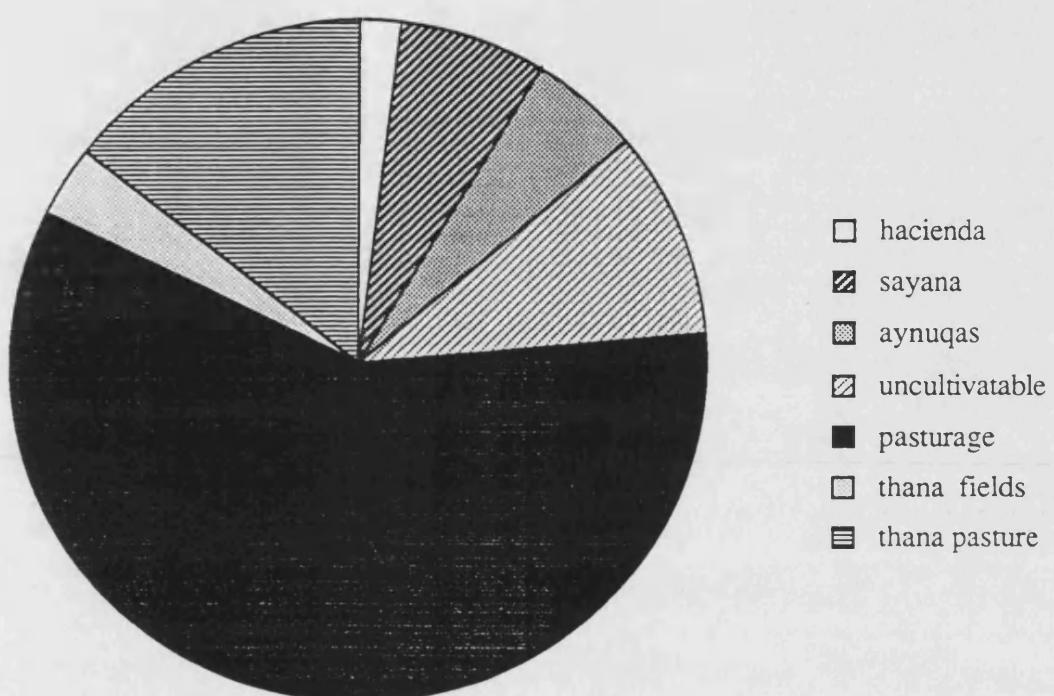
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<sup>2</sup> There are in all these cadastral surveys a large number of men aged 40, 45 and 50, but very few who are recorded as being in between these ages. The **padrón** of 1881 records 9 out of 43 Pocabaya men as being age 60 whilst the **padrón** of 1900 records none. Contemporary Pocabayenos are very unclear about their age and this is almost certainly to have been the case in the past. Very few Pocabayenos in their forties or over were able to accurately compute their age (as well as quite a few younger Pocabayenos).



**Figure 6: Landholdings 1955 and 1992\***

\*The figures for 1955 are from a professional survey undertaken by officers of the Agrarian Reform. The figures for 1992 are estimates.



**Figure 7: Land use in Pocobaya  
including ex-hacienda and ex-Thana lands**

There are three types of communally shared lands in Pocabaya to which every owner of **sayaña** is entitled (see Figure 7). First is the pasture (529 has) which anyone can use to pasture their sheep, goats, cattle, donkeys, horses or mules. The second type of communal land is known as **aynuqa** and is shared by all the households in equal parts. **Aynuqa**, like **sayaña**, is agricultural land and includes some of the most fertile land of Pocabaya. There are 37.4 hectares of traditional **aynuqa** land which was shared even during the time when Pocabaya was an hacienda. The 17 hectares of ex-hacienda land is also shared, as is the land finally won from the village of Thana which includes 24.3 hectares of arable land. This land is rotated in a similar way to **aynuqa** but is called **asinta** (Sp. hacienda) and comprises most of the best land for wheat and barley. Of the total 710 hectares which comprises the entire territory of Pocabaya (of which 123 hectares is cultivable) only 55 are actually privately owned and is transmitted through inheritance. Although individual have full legal title to these **sayaña** plots, they are in practice impossible to sell, not even to someone within the community, although some Pocabayenos believed this to be theoretically possible. The **sayaña** can perhaps more accurately be described as usufruct rather than complete private ownership.

The 17 hectares of hacienda land, as well as the hacienda building were legally given over to the Pocabayenos in 1957, although the **hacendado** continued to send his **mayordomo**, estate manager, to collect the products of his land until 1977 when it was finally decided to resist this. The men of the village got together when the **mayordomo** came on his horse and told him to go away and never return. Despite hurling abuse and threatening all sorts of legal and physical harm, the **mayordomo** was thenceforth never heard of again. This was the greatest example of communal solidarity and joint action since the conflict with Thana<sup>3</sup> and is mentioned with great pride and sense of victory.

The lands are redistributed once a year with care taken to measure certain fields exactly. The basic principle is that everyone gets a turn at the better land. The best land is Thintilaya, which has a year-round source of water as well as the level fields at the lower reaches of the village which can best be used for wheat or barley. We can see how a certain egalitarian ethic is founded on the annual distribution of land.

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<sup>3</sup> See Chapter 1 for an account of the conflict with Thana.

## Communal Labour

Group labour is organised and scheduled on a community-wide basis by the elected head of the community the **Secretario General**. He will schedule work days up to five times a year. He has no means of coercion at his disposal even though all those who attend these group labour days during the year are noted and those absent are subject to fine. There are always some men away working in the mines or in the **yungas** who can not be expected to return to Pocabaya for one day, but as these days are spread out over the year it is rare that any one person will manage to miss all of them. In practice, all men present in Pocabaya do give up their time and labour, and attendance is taken quite seriously. Much more common than a fine is for a man to be faced with the general disapproval of his peers if he fails to attend these work days for unconvincing reasons.

Work days are generally devoted to maintaining the paths that lead to Pocabaya. The path to Sorata is frequently washed away in a landslide during the rainy season so every now and again all the able-bodied men and a few of the not so able-bodied descend the mountain with their picks and shovels to make and secure the trail once again. Even the older men attend and do as much as they can.

In exceptional cases the **Secretario General** can call all the men together at short notice. One such occasion was when three Pocabayenos were carried away by the river in a flash flood. All the men were involved in the search, and when the bodies were found, they all accompanied them back up to Pocabaya. Once again, everyone offered as much help they were able. Those who were not strong enough to carry the body nevertheless followed, sharing their coca with others and offering advice on how to make the stretcher and tie the corpse on. In such a task every effort is made to include everyone in work. Turns were taken to carry the stretcher and it was thought slightly unseemly for someone to carry it for much longer than the other unless he was a brother or a close relative: it is fitting to exert oneself in a demonstration of grief but to do so too much could be seen as being presumptuous.

Labour groups larger than those comprised of household members also form for agricultural labour. The guiding principle here is **ayni**, reciprocated labour. It is, however, acceptable to repay in kind by way of food or the loan of an ox. Although

**ayni** can be repaid in cash, this is not strictly considered to be **ayni**; it is nonetheless a form which is considered to have become increasingly more common.

This system of reciprocity has been called 'the glue that keeps Andean societies together' (Johnsson 1986:118) because it permeates most aspects of social life (cf. also Allen 1988; Sallnow 1987). The reciprocity of labour, **ayni** is exercised when the household has insufficient labour to perform a particular agricultural task. In theory, **ayni** can involve any two people who may need each other's help; in practice, however, **ayni** relations are based on kinship.

This was also the case in the 1940s when Tschopik was doing fieldwork in the altiplano:

A man exchanges labour in the fields with his father, paternal uncles, their sons, his brothers, their sons, his own sons, and, today, with his sisters, daughters, and some maternal relatives. He cooperates to a lesser degree with his wife's father and her brothers. A woman's first obligations are to her husband; her own family comes second. Each day that she works for her father-in-law or her brothers-in-law cancels a day of her husband's AINI indebtedness to them. Sons and daughters work for their fathers without exchanging labour until marriage. Substitution is possible under the AINI system; a man, if unable to fulfil his obligations, may send a brother or married son in his place, provided he repay this person with the required number of day's work.

(Tschopik 1946:542)

Much the same system is in operation in Pocabaya today. If two brothers-in-law get on well together they will exchange **ayni**. When Pastuku needs help breaking open the earth of a field, he will ask his brother-in-law, Yustakyu, to help. When Yustakyu needs help he will, in turn, ask Pastuku. On occasion they will both work together with their father-in-law Jirunimu. Much of the work can be done by an individual or a **chachawarmi** (couple) but people say that working with more people is easier and more pleasant. A day of such labour may involve three or four families all working together, including the children, and will inevitably involve a long and pleasant lunch in the middle of the day.

Another **ayni** constellation could be based on **compadrazgo** (godparenthood). A **padrino**, godfather, may ask his **compadres**<sup>4</sup>, co-parents, to assist him in planting a

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<sup>4</sup> The godfather, **padrino** is referred to as such not only by his godchild but by the child's parents as well. He is in a position of authority and respect over the whole family.

field for maize. A case in point would be Anklisa and Jasinta who own a comparatively large amount of land but feel unable to do all the agricultural labour themselves. If they enter into *ayni* relations on a basis of labour reciprocity they would, in turn, be obliged to work on the fields of all those who have helped them. Given the large number of fields they own, this is impractical. Thus Anklisa and Jasinta engage the labour of their *compadres* who have less land, and therefore more time, to work on theirs. Rather than return the labour, they may lend out a field for a year, pay in an undefined amount of potatoes or maize, or not give anything immediately at all. In the latter case it may be that the *compadres* borrowed money in the past and were unable to pay it back; their labour will cancel this debt although it is most likely an implicit arrangement rather than something stated formally. Similarly, the *compadres* may agree to give their labour for nothing in the expectation that they may be able to arrange a loan or some other form of assistance on some future occasion. In this sense, *ayni* works as a form of insurance between fictive kin.

I saw no evidence of clearly defined categories of obligation in Pocabaya as described by Tschopik. Even where there is a clear sense of obligation, such as in a *compadrazgo*, it must still be negotiated into the pattern of the general relationship. *Ayni* relations tend to be between people who have a good understanding with each other and get on well. Any one couple may have a constellation of others whom they may ask for assistance but they will choose and develop those which have worked in the past with few problems.

*Ayni*, with its egalitarian emphasis on symmetrical reciprocity (Gose 1986a:10), is reminiscent of the ritual sharing of food, drink and coca noted in the previous chapter (*cf.* Allen 1988:144). Pocabayenos describe it as the ideal type of economic relationship even though they bemoan the fact that it does not function the way it should (*cf.* Sallnow 1989a). *Ayni* is analogous to the sharing of coca, food, and drink, not only in binding people together but in a deeper sense in that it is a model of behaviour concordant with the 'web of reciprocity' (Allen 1988) that runs through and sustains Andean society. This is why in Pocabaya when a richer peasant engages others in wage labour s/he and his/her spouse still provide food and often coca to convert it symbolically, at least, into a reciprocal arrangement. They also may call the relationship *ayni* although all are aware that it is in fact not. Pocabayenos define themselves as humans by virtue of their

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For a fuller account of godparenthood see Chapter Five.

coöperation with each other and their relationship with the spirit world which also has many of the characteristics of an *ayni* relationship (see below). Non-Aymara such as Sorateños, who are not *jaqi* (people), do not, I was told, enter into *ayni* relations.<sup>5</sup>

## Fiestas

The entire adult population must attend village fiestas. These include the two most important feasts of **Todos Santos** (All Saints), and **Anat Phiest** (Carnival) as well as **San Juan**, the Aymara New Year (June 21<sup>st</sup>), **Candelaria** (Candlemas), an important fiesta to make offerings to the **Pachamama** and the **kunturmamanis**, as well as the village fiesta in September, **Natividad**. The entire adult population also attends funerals, and any other occasion that demands a communal meal. All these fiestas, even the ones that are nominally based on Christian feasts, involve the relationship of the community with either the **achachilas**, the **Pachamama**, or both. I was often told, as a matter of course, that the whole village was in attendance even though I could quite clearly see that this was not the case. Nevertheless, it was deemed important to impress upon me that everyone was there. People do make a genuine effort to return to Pocobaya for the principal fiestas, even if they have been working far away in the mines. This is especially true for the fiesta of **Natividad**, the fiesta of the village, where even people who have left long ago return to visit their families.

Fiestas are eagerly anticipated in Pocobaya. The large fiestas require considerable preparation and the excitement escalates. During **Todos Santos** (All Saints) for example, bread must be specially baked. The whole household is involved in this activity which is much enjoyed by all. There is something of a division of labour in that it is generally the males of the household who collect the wood, light and take care of the oven, whilst it is the women who make and shape the dough. This is, however, not a hard-and-fast rule and frequently saw men enjoy themselves in kneading and shaping dough. One way or another everyone is involved and once the loaves are baked, the whole family will gather and begin consuming the hot bread.

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<sup>5</sup> The people of Chuschi apparently conceive of the difference between themselves and *mestizos* (*q'ala*) in very similar terms (Isbell 1978:73) as is the case with the people of Qamawara studied by Sallnow (1987:110) as well as Gose (1986a:6) who argues that *ayni* relations are furthermore constitutive of class difference in the town of Huaquirca.

Similarly during Carnival and the village fiesta of Natividad in September, maize beer, **k'usa**, must be made and this serves to build the excitement before the fiesta. **K'usa** must be tasted in the preceding days to see that it is fermenting well and this 'tasting' very often exceeds what is strictly needed to check on its progress. Drinking in general is a central part to all fiestas and in Pocobaya fiestas and feasts are the only time people drink: it is quintessentially a social activity. "Drinking can constitute and act of sharing and collaboration through which the community is created and sustained, through which the community identity is created...and continuing care for the supernatural powers is ensured" (Harvey 1991:2).

Fiestas are when the whole village eats, drinks, chews coca and dances together. Most of the major fiestas require dance groups and music. The dance groups must be organised and the costumes hired; on some occasions a band must be contracted and paid for and beer must be donated. All these activities need to be organised and they generally include the whole village. A committee will be arranged for the hiring and collection of the dance costumes. In a village meeting this role of organiser and sponsor either will be volunteered for or someone will be persuaded to do it.

There is increased sexual activity during fiestas,<sup>6</sup> as already mentioned, and this is the time when conception and birth are considered to occur. Fiestas are also typically the time when a man will 'capture' his prospective bride and take her to his house (see previous chapter). Thus sex, conception, birth and marriage, are placed into a communal context where one might ordinarily consider them to involve only members of the household. Moreover, not only does the human reproductive capacity of the household require legitimisation in the eyes of the community through the **ritucha** hair-cutting ceremony (*cf.* Bloch and Guggenheim 1981), conception itself is not a personal act but an act that is located in a time of general, community-wide, activity relating to the fertility of the land and the community; a time when there is a heightened awareness of the presence of the **achachilas** and **Pachamama** and, by extension, the moral force of the community.

Fiestas are intrinsically communal but, moreover, they are an important means of interacting with the tellurian forces. One must not lose sight of the fact that the community is defined by its exchange relationship with the land. To drink and dance is

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<sup>6</sup> This is particularly the case during Carnival where even married persons, women as well as men, are granted a degree of sexual licence (see also Arnold 1989:147).

not only a means of enjoyment but a religious act in itself. In partaking in these activities one not only affirms one's identity with the group, but primarily affirms a relationship with the *pacha*, the spirit of the earth. The unity of the group and the interaction within it is a corollary of the relationship with the *pacha*. It is then clear why it is so important for the community to be together for fiestas and why migrants return year after year after year: to assert their identity as human and moral beings which are so defined by their relationship with the earth and the community.

## The Community, the Supernatural, and Shared Misfortune

The unitary nature of the community is most clearly expressed in the religious or mystical aspects of life. One of the basic principles of Aymara life is exchange and reciprocity. One definition of the *comunidad*, the community, in terms of Pocabaya, would be 'those who together have an exchange relationship with the **Pachamama** and **achachilas**.' As individuals or small groups, Pocabayenos cultivate the land but the land is the land of all of them, and the land of the ancestors, the *achachilas*. The names for all the places in Pocabaya were given by the *achachilas* and together they must exchange alcohol, coca and cigarettes with the spirits of below for the fertility of the land and for rain. As such, they share good and bad fortune alike. Real people, that is, *jaqi* (those defined as such by traditional values as opposed to *q'ara*, those who have lost their Aymara identity and culture) are defined by their relationship to the land; they are equally defined by their relationship to those who cultivate the same land as they do. In a similar way that a person is never complete until part of a *chachawarmi*, a couple is not complete without others that form a community. In many of communities that managed to avoid becoming haciendas, this analogy is made explicit and the community is divided into a 'male' half and a 'female'; half. This type of organisation is particularly common in the Aymara areas of southern Bolivia as well as in parts of Peru (Harris 1978, 1980; Isbell 1978; Fioravanti-Molinié 1982; Platt 1986; Schüler 1987).

Any act which offends the supernatural beings affects the whole community. Incest, for example, is thought to cause climatic catastrophe for the whole village and not just the people immediately involved. This belief was at the root of the rancour occasioned by the discovery that a Pocabayeno had made his mute step-daughter

pregnant: he was blamed for many misfortunes that occurred in the succeeding year. The misfortune was compounded by the fact that the girl was believed to have killed the newly-born baby to hide the fact (it had not been known that she was pregnant) and buried it in an inappropriate place. Someone out herding her sheep saw the girl acting strangely from afar. By the time she arrived to investigate, the girl had gone but she found the small corpse of the baby buried under some rocks.

Later in the day, the mute girl was questioned and confessed to being pregnant and giving birth to a dead baby. Nobody seems to believe that it was a still birth, but her reply was accepted. When she was asked who was responsible for making her pregnant, she had no difficulty in pointing out her step-father. Infanticide is condemned in Pocabaya but people understand that there are times when it is probably the best thing to do in a situation. So long as a certain discretion is observed, no one committing infanticide will be questioned too closely, let alone condemned in public.

The man in question was strongly criticised for his irresponsible actions and was blamed for much of the misfortune that occurred at that time. This occurred some years ago and the culprit is now fully rehabilitated into the community and the subject is not normally mentioned. This type of 'forgive and forget' attitude is typical for Pocabayenos and, over time, such incidents lose their significance and are virtually forgotten especially if the guilty party appears suitably chastened. Carter and Mamani provide a very different experience for a men guilty of incest in the community of Irpa Chico on the altiplano:

Their names are used as a curse and all avoid whenever possible any contact with them; they do not include them in the exchange of potatoes (*trueque*) and nor are they considered for *ayni*. Parents forbid their children to be friendly with them or their families, and if they discover that there has been contact, they shake the clothes of their children as if they could be infected by some horrendous disease.

Carter & Mamani 1982:192

I found no evidence for such ostracism in this instance or any other comparable case.<sup>7</sup> In fact, the only case of which I am aware where Pocabayenos as a group

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<sup>7</sup> Isbell (1978:136) however, heard of case in Chuschi where a man and his daughter were found guilty of incest. They were stripped naked and publicly flogged before being expelled from the community.

ostracised anybody was when someone converted to evangelical Protestantism. The membership of a cult so opposed to traditional Aymara culture and customs is an offence against the mores of the community more grievous even than incest.

1990 was a bad year for Pocabaya as there were an unusual number of deaths in the community, and many of these fourteen deaths were deaths of mature, but not old, adults. No one, not even the *yatiri*, was able to discover the cause for this misfortune or dispel it. It was suggested that since the misfortune was affecting the community as a whole, the Pocabaya *yatiri* was also affected. It was decided to call in a *yatiri* from a village higher in the mountains to purge the village of this bad luck or witchcraft, whatever the source of the misfortune was. This was done and the *yatiri* offered llama fat and llama wool in addition to the usual incense, coca, alcohol and cigarettes as well as other secret herbs. This successfully purged the village of the evil and the following year exhibited a much more normal death rate.

1990 was difficult for another reason: lack of rain. A group of leading men persuaded the **Secretario General** to ask the *yatiri* to make an offering to the **achachilas**. The *yatiri* read the leaves of all the men to see who would accompany him to Wilaquta (*wila.quta*, red or blood lake), a small thermal lake high in the mountains, and make an offering to the **achachilas**. The red earth colours the water of Wilaquta and gives the lake its name. One afternoon the *yatiri* made the trip up to Wilaquta with seven men all carrying alcohol, cigarettes and coca. The *yatiri* himself carried incense and various other things to offer to the **achachilas**. Arriving before the sun set the *yatiri* made his offerings to the **achachilas** intoning his plea for rain. After the offering was complete, all the men poured out the alcohol they had carried up and filled the containers with water.

After the libations and offerings were completed, everyone returned in darkness to Pocabaya. I was told that it was necessary to return in darkness for the efficacy of the procedure, but no one was able to give me a reason for this other than that the efficacy of the ritual depended upon returning in darkness.<sup>8</sup> Given that communication with the **achachilas** through the *yatiri* or a *ch'amakani* is best done in darkness, it would seem quite logical to presume that a rain-making ritual would need to take place in the dark for maximum effect: darkness and therefore night is an important aspect of the

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<sup>8</sup> When pressed, an informant told me that to return in daylight would scare the pasturing sheep. This neither struck me as plausible or was confirmed by anyone else I asked.

They will experience these problems until the time of the children of their children until the time the grandchildren of their grandchildren walk.

So if we realise and join in one single agreement we can unite and walk well as brothers and sisters.

Iwal puwrikiy sarnaqaskaspa asta qhipa  
timpukamasta wawapan wawanipa asta  
allchhipan kamisti sarnaqastan jay  
ukham. Intuns sitix maynix amuyasnaxa  
taqpacha sapa maynit mä suma  
amuyt'anisnaxa ast ukhasti  
mayjachasiwasnan ast mä jilaki mä  
kullakaki sum sarnaqawasnan. 25

Note how often the word **sarnaqaña**, to walk, (lines 2, 6, 15, 18, 20, 25) is used.

**Sarnaqaña**, has a particularly moral content when used out of its normal context. In line 2 he uses it in a relatively straight forward manner: **Sapa sap sarnaqasiri** - each will walk alone. The suffix **-si** is reflexive and **-iri** means an habitual action. The phrase thus comes to mean 'each will walk himself alone'. The implications of this are brought out by another use of **sarnaqaña** in lines 5 and 6: **sapa sap sarnaqawi**. This literally means 'each will have his own walking'. '**Sarnaqawi**' contains the '**wi**' suffix which changes a verb into a noun. **Sarnaqawi** can also be translated as one's life. It is also used to translate the Spanish word **costumbre**, custom. One's cultural customs are those elements of life, those rituals and processes, that set Aymaras apart from others in their procession along the path of life marked by the **achachilas**. This aspect of **sarnaqaña** as the path of life is clearly seen in the reference to **thaki** in the preceding lines 4 and 5 (cf. chapter 2). The word **thaki** generally means path but is also used as a metaphor for life, the particular path one walks towards becoming a fully moral and socialised person, a **suma jaqi**. The **thaki** is also clearly rooted in communalism and the communal identity.

Istanisluku has a very clear view of what the community should be. His vision is one where there is no room for individuality at all: there should be "one voice and one thought" and all should walk together. There could be no clearer expression of the intense communalism than is implied by 'walking' on the land of the **achachilas**. With such a powerful prescription for a single identity it is not surprising that there are countervailing tendencies.

## The Household

The locus of the opposite pole to communalism resides in the household and the family. It is important to reiterate that the household in Pocabayeno terms is not simply the house. A household in Pocabaya is based on land ownership. All those who live and work together on the basis of that ownership can be said to constitute a household. In practice, even when several families have access to land on the basis of the landownership of one member, usually an elderly father, everyone lives in the same compound and works the fields together. In Pocabaya, such a living arrangement is considered to be a single household.

The thesis that the interests of the household are opposed to the interests of the wider community has been widely argued (Sahlins 1974; Ortner 1974; Bourdieu 1977). Although this view has been somewhat criticised (see Harris 1981), it is indeed the case in Pocabaya that whereas it is considered that the interests of the community and household *should* coincide, it is recognised that often they do not.

The importance of the household can scarcely be overstated for it is the first point of reference for Pocabayenos. Most activities revolve around the household and days can go by without the members of a particular household having a meaningful exchange with members of another household.

Household and nuclear families are usually, but not always, coterminous. In an extended household there is a further division on the basis of married couples (*chachawarmis*) and their children.

The boundary of the family is quite clearly demarcated by eating habits. Families eat together, generally in the kitchen. The time the family eats together is the most intimate and it is rarely exposed to outsiders. Sharing food with others on a daily basis is rare, except in the case of an elderly parent. Visitors from outside the village will, of course, be offered food, although they will not be expected to eat with the family: they will be taken to the best room in the house where food will be brought to them. Sometimes the man of the house will accompany them but rarely any other members.

Even when a compound is shared by several related families, each head of household cooks for her own immediate family and it is usually the case that both the preparation and consumption of food is done separately. Each nuclear family will have

its own separate room and it is to this room that they will retire to eat. One household in Pocabaya has four **chachawarmis** and they all cook and eat separately even though they are obliged to share the same kitchen.

The intimacy of the household is also illustrated by the manner in which non-members are allowed to enter. When a Pocabayeno approaches a house in which s/he does not live, s/he will always wait at the door until someone approaches and invites the visitor in. It is considered to be extremely bad manners to enter a compound without explicitly being invited in. Even siblings or close friends will wait at the doorway to announce their presence before entering although they may cross the threshold if no one answers immediately.

Visiting for its own sake is not common in Pocabaya (*cf.* Johnsson 1986), and often many days will pass before anyone who is not a member of the household will enter it. It may well be that an occasion for a visit is created in the form of requests for borrowing a tool or some similar pretext. To casually 'drop by' is not common practice and this illustrates one way in which the household and family boundaries are drawn.

The closeness of the family and household are an important part of daily life in Pocabaya. It is within the household and the family that one retreats from the outside world; in general, the household is the source of security and privacy. The withdrawing of the household within itself and its self-imposed semi-isolation stress the difference between everyday life and the days of fiestas or ceremonial occasions. The intensely social nature of these occasions, where food and drink are widely shared, where the doors of the household are opened and the house fills with visitors, often from afar is in sharp contrast to the much less social day to day existence. The profoundly social nature of communal occasions is perhaps given greater force by their contrast to the household's isolated existence, which increase the anticipation and enjoyment of people on these occasions. The tension between household and community would seem to emphasise and encourage the sense of communal felt on those occasions when the community comes together.

As we might expect from Simmel (1955), division and conflict are most clearly seen in those very same institutions and practices which most demonstrate communal solidarity. It is therefore not coincidental that the breaking-up of the household, the loss of a member in marriage, typically occurs and is considered appropriate to occur during the time of greatest communal activity, fiestas. The tension between household and community is recognised in the rhetoric surrounding the 'capture' of his bride by a young

man, his subsequent 'assault' at the hands of her parents and the fact that his household must pay compensation to the young woman's household for the loss of a member. It is significant that it is considered fitting and proper for the woman's parents to express anger and hostility and to hit the young man even if they have no animosity towards him. It is frequently the case that blows struck and words spoken are not as hard as they may appear.

## Land and Labour

Land disputes seem to be endemic in all peasant societies and Pocabaya is certainly no exception. Despite the fact that all the field boundaries are carefully marked with a large stone or cairn, there is always room for one extra furrow to be ploughed and then another and so on. It is also possible for the markers to be moved. These disputes are referred to the **Secretario General** who arbitrates as best he can but a lot of bitterness inevitably surrounds such disputes and causes much rancour. The situation is even more difficult to control when someone pastures their sheep on another's maize field or when the **Secretario General**'s wife manages to harvest just a little of someone else's field. Frequently it is impossible to identify the perpetrator and this serves to raise suspicion among people as the victim tries to figure out who stole his crop.

The degree to which Pocabayenos mistrust each other is shown by the fact that they all lock their homes. I was constantly being told that there were many thieves about and to always lock my room. Every time I neglected to do this, even for a few minutes, I was again earnestly reminded and mildly chided for my carelessness. Nevertheless, I never heard of anyone having anything stolen from their home in the whole time I was in Pocabaya.

The decline in the use of **ayni** is also an indication of the disintegration of trust and solidarity. Previously, I was told, **ayni** was used quite commonly for various types of labour. The person doing the **ayni** would be paid either in reciprocated labour or an equivalent in food. I was told that **ayni** really was not worth the effort any more with people who were not relatives. People outside one's immediate circle could simply not be trusted to repay properly as they would always try and skimp by either doing less work or by not repaying in full.

Richer peasants will prefer to pay three bolivianos (70p) a day to hire labour than enter into a relationship that requires them to work themselves or repay in kind. This labour does, however, include a cooked meal and doesn't cover the full day. The labourers will not expect to have to work more than five hours on a given day. This type of wage labour is sometimes referred to as *ayni* even though it is quite clearly of a different nature as it does not require reciprocity in labour or kind (Sallnow 1989a). The fact that food is provided does, however, seem to go some way to mute the essentially mercenary nature of the transaction.

There is a paradox at the centre of *ayni* relations: it is both a means whereby Pocabayenos protect themselves from the vicissitudes of the market, and also a direct consequence of their exclusion from it. That is, one reason why Pocabayenos enter into *ayni* relationships is because they do not have the necessary financial resources to engage wage labourers. Wealthier peasants clearly have a preference for the latter over *ayni*. Reciprocal aid "is a practice sustained and reproduced both as a necessary production strategy in thrall to the dominant capitalist system, and at the same time as a celebrated institutional barrier for holding that system at bay" (Hahn 1992:250).<sup>10</sup>

## Fiestas

...if anarchy is to be avoided, the individuals who make up a society must from time to time be reminded, at least in symbol, of the underlying order that is supposed to guide their social activities. Ritual performances have this function for the participation group as a whole; they momentarily make explicit what is otherwise a fiction.

Leach 1965:16

After Leach, we can see that fiestas, in their celebration of solidarity and group identity can be seen as expressing an ideal rather than the actual situation. The fact that I was told several times that attendance was complete when it clearly was not, seems to support this view. Moreover, many who do attend do so only for a short while and then leave discreetly. One family rarely attends fiestas and keeps very much to itself. The man is known to be a heavy and violent drinker and it is for this reason he does not attend as frequently as others.

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<sup>10</sup> For a further discussion on the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in reciprocal aid, see Sallnow (1989).

Fiestas always involve a cessation of all but the most essential agricultural labour. Most adults, male and female, do no work at all during fiestas, as the sheep and cattle are taken care of by children. They are thus free to dance, eat and, above all, to get drunk. The larger fiestas in Pocabaya can last as long as two weeks and end when the entire village supply of maize beer (*k'usa*), beer and grain alcohol, stocked during the preceding weeks, is depleted.

With such a degree of alcohol consumption it is perhaps not surprising that sub-surface tensions come out in the form of arguments and fights. This is particularly the case with marital violence which almost always tends to occur when the husband is drunk in a fiesta. Marital violence in Pocabaya is relatively infrequent compared to the incidence in the Aymara suburbs of La Paz where many women simply expect to get beaten up on Saturday night. This is never the case in Pocabaya where drinking is limited to certain occasions. Nevertheless, there is at least one woman who dreads fiestas because she knows her husband is certain to beat her up if he attends. This man is unusual in Pocabaya in that he spends a lot of time with his other wife in El Alto, an Aymara suburb of La Paz and is probably the most acculturated of all Pocabayenos.

Violence, however, is not restricted to couples. Men will fight each other and even women can be seen knocking each other into the dust. Drunkenness also occasions the telling of woes and in the evenings of fiestas it is common to see groups of people in each other's homes crying about their wives, their husbands, the land, their poverty, and the misery of life in general (*cf.* Harvey 1991:16). To get drunk and to cry is actually a central rather than incidental part of fiestas and is a noted element of fiestas throughout the Andes.

Crying while drunk is not only an emotional release; it is an expression of confidence in one's drinking companions. Often, too, festering hostilities, submerged under layers of praise and endearment, break out while [people] are drunk. While this is hardly surprising, it is noteworthy that drinking provides one of the few contexts in which displays of grief and anger are even tolerable.

Allen 1988:148

The irony, mentioned above, of the greatest divisions between Pocabayenos coming to the fore on the occasions of greatest *comunitas* is, in fact, a double one. Aymaras, and Pocabayenos are no exception, are known for being very reserved in their emotional expression when they are sober. The arguments, violence and crying can be

seen as a great purging which allows for smoother relationships outside fiesta periods. The telling of woes through copious tears not only allows people to get things 'off their chests', but creates a certain bonding with those who cry together. The importance of this bonding, the fact that "We got very drunk and cried together", is explicitly recognised by Pocabayenos themselves. The crying in fiestas is similar to the crying seen in funerals as it often takes the form of a lament. Rare are the occasions in which Pocabayenos express emotion out of a communal and ritualised context. Communality then, is recognised and affirmed even in the breach.

The consequences of the communalised nature of expression is illustrated by an incident of attempted suicide in which the actor saw no other solution to his problems after the community had decided that he was the guilty party in a dispute with his wife.

### A Case of Suicide and the Isolation of the Individual

Suicide (*jiwayasiña*) among the Aymara is apparently very common although there are no official statistics at all. Among Pocabayenos it is well known that swallowing pesticide is a particularly efficacious method. The use of pesticide in suicide is apparently so widespread that some rural doctors always carry the antidote with them. According to Pocabayenos, the favoured method among the people of the *altiplano* is throwing oneself down a well. I heard much anecdotal evidence of suicide during my stay in Pocabaya and although there is no concrete statistical data, it is the impression of health workers I spoke to that the incidence of suicide is widespread and high in the Aymara area north of La Paz which includes the area of *altiplano* around Lake Titicaca as well as Pocabaya.<sup>11</sup>

In the two years that I spent in Pocabaya there was only one attempted suicide. However a successful attempt was made in the year before I arrived. No one seems to know why old Píru wanted to kill himself and I could gather little information about the whole affair other than that he was accorded a normal funeral and burial. This is usually the case with suicides in Pocabaya, even though people were aware that this was not in

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<sup>11</sup> Spedding (1989) notes the incidence of suicide among Aymara in the Yungas and attributes this to the despair people are driven to through excessive gossip and criticism.

accordance with the teachings of the Church. Suicide and murder are the only forms of death that has no indirect cause: i.e., the death is not caused by witchcraft or the action of a **kharisiri** (fat stealer) or supernaturally-inspired illness.

The suicide attempt for which I was present, however, illustrates much about how an individual can feel rejected and abandoned by the social group and in turn how the people around him react. It began with a rumour of marital infidelity. The word was being spread by one particular woman that Anklisa was having an affair and this rumour eventually reached his wife. Anklisa and Ankustina are known for their good relationship but on this occasion an argument broke out resulting in Anklisa beating her several times and causing heavy bruising on her face.

The incident became public knowledge and Ankustina left home and moved in with her brother the following night. It was a long night with Anklisa threatening everybody and finally going off to the police to make a complaint of calumny against the woman who started these rumours. If he ever got to the police they were not interested for he came back alone. The **pärinus**, godparents, of the couple tried to sort it all out and each in turn knelt before the other in front of the **pärinus** and apologised. The situation seemed resolved but Anklisa resented the fact that everyone took Ankustina's side when, in his eyes, he was the victim of calumny. He was left with no other recourse and was obliged to accept the position taken by his **pärinus** and, by extension, the community in general.

That evening the couple had another argument which did not, however, come to blows and the following day both were absent from a funeral that was taking place. In the middle of the funeral someone came running to tell Anklisa's **compadres** that he had swallowed some pesticide. Those who were told went up to the house but not a single other person moved but remained drinking at the funeral.

Anklisa was in his house which soon filled with people. Most of the men were milling outside trying to see a car that had apparently run off the road on the other side of the valley. Most of the women were inside chatting and spinning wool. There were, however, a couple of people who were clearly concerned, forcing him to throw up repeatedly with considerable success. His two small children were in front of him uncomforted and bawling their eyes out. No one paid them much attention, not even to take them out of the room.

What is significant in terms of social relations is that only his relatives and fictive kin felt obliged to see what was happening. All the others at the cemetery barely showed

the slightest curiosity. Only his **compadres** were, in fact, directly informed which would seem to illustrate a general recognition that only they would be interested or have the obligation to attend.

At the house itself, the lackadaisical and casual manner of most of those present would seem to suggest that even among more intimate groups the degree of emotional involvement is rather less than ideally projected. One can imagine that Anklisa, instead of being reassured by his kith and kin, felt confirmed in his sense of isolation.

This incident also illustrates the consequences of overwhelming interdependence and a heavy stress on group identity. Anklisa's reaction to community pressure was an extreme but supremely individualistic one.

Another incident confirms the distance Pocabayenos seem to maintain between each other. When the three men were swept away in a flash flood most Pocabaya men were on their way to Sorata to receive food aid given out by the Club de Madres on behalf of USAID.<sup>12</sup> Four people saw them being washed away at about eight in the morning yet they continued to Sorata where they told the other Pocabayenos who were already there. They all collected their food and made their purchases and it was not until late afternoon that anyone started to look for the three men. It was by no means certain that they had died immediately.

These two incidents illustrate the atomization on a profound and emotional level of social relations in Pocabaya. They point to the apparent paradox of communal life: despite (or perhaps because of) the intense communal identity, emotional attachment to individuals is not nearly as strong. For all the expressions of communal solidarity in fiestas and other occasions, there is clearly sufficient stress in the lives of rural Aymara for them to be driven to suicide in significant numbers.

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<sup>12</sup> This food aid is not famine relief as even during the drought of 1990-91 the situation never came close to famine in the area of Pocabaya. The wide distribution of American wheat does, however, lower the price of local wheat and makes it virtually impossible for local producers, such as Pocabayenos, to sell their wheat on the market. Most Pocabayeno wheat is exchanged for goods from the altiplano such as llama and alpaca products.

# The Physical and Social Environment

There are, however, other ways open to Pocabayenos to express their anxieties about life that direct attention away from the community. These, moreover, serve to turn Pocabaya even more into itself and strengthen the image of the community as assailed by external forces.

## Witchcraft and Kharisiris

In the cases of evil sorcerers (*laykas*) and *kharisiris*, semi-human creatures who can take human form and who suck fat from human bodies, anxiety is directed to beings outside the community.<sup>1</sup> This may be a way of dealing with a conflict within the village (*cf.* Kluckhorn 1944) or it may be a way of articulating the fear Pocabayenos have of the predatory world beyond the village.

I was told repeatedly in response to my questions that there were no *laykas*, witches, in Pocabaya even though there were in other villages. Nevertheless, everyone is potentially a *layka* as it only takes a little bit of occult knowledge to bewitch someone. When Jirman died in the flash flood, his brother blamed it on a *layka* in the village and overturned his body at the burial in the way of a curse on the person who had caused his untimely death. This is quite unusual and although people were dismayed, they put it down to the brother's distress and grief. I was told not to worry, as there were no *laykas* in Pocabaya and it is the case that *laykas* are held to be from other villages.

When travelling to the altiplano, Pocabayenos are always sure to travel in sizable groups and never, but never, alone. I was told one may come across friendly strangers who are in fact *kharisiris*. *Kharisiris* are something like vampires for they will slowly suck their victim's body fat.<sup>2</sup> *Lik'i*, body fat, is considered to be an essential life

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<sup>1</sup> See also Spedding (1989) and Crandon-Malamud (1991). On a similar phenomenon in the Peruvian Andes (*pishtaco* or *ñak'aks*) see Allen (1988:111); Gose (1986b).

<sup>2</sup> There are tales in contemporary southern Spain of the *sacagrasas*, literally, the fat-extractor. The *sacagrasas* is reputed to extract the body fat out of small children and thus cause their otherwise inexplicable death. Pitt-Rivers (1954) describes the *sacagrasas* (despite its name) as a being who extracts the blood out of children. The parallels nevertheless with

substance. **Llama lik'i** is considered to be a particularly good offering to the forces of the **Manqhapacha**, as it is a convenient substitute for a whole llama who, in turn, is a substitute for a human being (cf. Sallnow 1987:132; Bastien 1978).

I was told that a **kharisiri** will use an apparatus disguised as a watch to extract the fat although this is not a widespread belief. The victim of a **kharisiri** is not aware that s/he has been attacked until it is too late and begins to gradually waste away.

The belief in **kharisiri** is very potent indeed. I have seen someone who believed himself to be bewitched by the **kharisiri** stop eating and start wasting away as he was convinced of his fate. The energetic ministrations of the **yatiri** (not always considered to be effective against **kharisiris**) persuaded him that he was safe and to start eating again.

Crandon-Malamud (*ibid.*) reports that until the 1950s the **kharisiri** was universally considered to have the appearance of a Franciscan Friar. "It had a broad Franciscan hat and a long beard, and it roamed the countryside where people often sleep to watch over their fields at planting and harvest. The **kharisiri** magically removed the fat from his victims' kidneys and gave it to the bishop. Out of the kidney fat of the Aymara Indians the bishop made holy oil" (1991:120). Since the Fifties, however, the **kharisiris** in this area are reported to have the appearance of a **mestizo** who sells the fat to pharmacies in La Paz where it can be bought to make luxury soaps for export and for the Bolivian elite (*ibid.*).

In Pocabaya I was also told that the **kharisiri** sell blood and fat to urban hospitals as well as to the bishop although people were unclear as to what was done with it there. Some surmised that the doctors used it in operations for **q'ara** patients. Belief in the **kharisiri** is very old but the inclusion of modern elements such as the watch-like instrument and the sale of blood and fat to urban hospitals would seem to suggest an anxiety about modern culture in general and hospitals in particular. Crandon-Malamud asserts that the belief in **kharisiri** and its development through time reflects the change of oppressors from the traditional Hispanic elite to one of capitalist market relations. The belief in **kharisiris** is clearly an expression of anxiety with respect to the outside world in general and mistrust of its inhabitants.

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the **kharisiri/pishtaco** phenomenon in the Andes are quite striking but whether it is a direct borrowing, I am unable to say. Stern (1987:170-1) suggests, however, that **kharisiri** beliefs may have an historical basis and that they derive from the practice of Spanish soldiers who used the fat from Indians' bodies to salve their wounds after battle.

Andeans are not only expressing a fear of outsiders in general and **mestizos** and whites in particular in their **kharisiri** beliefs, but the very nature of these beliefs illustrates how Andeans view power and the illegitimate usurpation of power. Body fat, **lik'i**, as we saw earlier is a fundamental life source deemed to be given by the forces below in the form of the **Pachamama**. This gift defines the relationship of people with the spirit world and also accounts for the productivity engaged by people on the surface of the earth. **Kharisiri** beliefs can be seen as potent illustration, in Andean terms, of the illegitimate use of power by the outside world as represented by such things as the Church and modern hospitals. The power of **mestizos** and whites is attributable to the misappropriation for their own ends of the very life source given Indians by the **Pachamama**. The power of the Hispanic world is explained through this powerful metaphor of exploitation.<sup>3</sup>

The fact that Pocabayenos believe that even other Aymara can also be **kharisiris** and sell their fat to a bishop; is testament to the distrust Pocabayenos generally have for anyone outside their village. Given that **kharisiri**-type figures all over the Andes are considered to be in the form of **mestizos** or whites, one could conjecture that the belief that Indians too can be **kharisiris** is a relatively recent phenomenon and an illustration of how Pocabayenos increasingly see all of the outside world as hostile.

There is some evidence that fear mistrust of the outside world has, in fact, increased over time. Older Pocabayenos are much more likely to be exogamous than younger ones. Not only is this indicated by genealogies but by the recollections of the oldest members of the community. The oldest Pocabayenos remember wider and more intense relationships with neighbouring communities. These included trading routes beyond the one that exists today with the villages on the way to Lake Titicaca. Pocabayenos in times past apparently had relationships with communities as much as

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<sup>3</sup> Gose (1986b) has argued that belief in the **ñakaq** is an 'amoral assertion that production, power and riches demand organic tribute, the transcendental assimilation of the ruled'. Whereas I agree with Gose that **ñakaq** and **kharisiri** beliefs are consistent with Andean beliefs about individual productive power represented in body fat, we depart on the fact that fat is a returnable gift to the beings of below. At least in the case of Pocabaya, the appropriation of fat by the Church and State, although it accounts for their power, is illegitimate since the fat should travel down to the earth spirits and not up to the forces of the state and capitalism as Gose argues. In Gose's account of Huaquirca in Peru, he posits a fusion of Capitalist power and the power of the mountain spirits. Nothing could be further from the truth in Pocabaya and this may indeed account for the difference in interpretation (see also Gose 1986a:13-14).

several days' walk away on the pre-Incaic road to the jungle gold mining regions. Although Pocabayenos still walk along this road they make sure they do not sleep near settlements for fear of being attacked, robbed and murdered. When I walked this eight-day trail I was cautioned again and again with great fervour to avoid people and the few hamlets that I would come across and above all, of course, not to travel alone.

The irony is that violence along this road was much greater in the time up to the 1960s when armed outlaws preyed on travellers in the hope of stealing their gold. Apparently no such outlaws exist any more and reports of incidents along the trail are few and far between. It may, of course, be the case that the greater dangers of the past necessitated links with communities along the way for reasons of safety and that these links were made against the inclinations of Pocabayenos.

Pocabayenos, like anyone else, are subject to the stresses of daily life. There are, however, external factors that can be identified which Pocabayenos talk about as causing them particular concern and may account for the intensity of the feeling that the only safe place in a hostile world is Pocabaya. The first of these is the lack of land and the perception that it is becoming increasingly difficult to gain a living off the land. The second, less clearly articulated, is the problem of living in a country where their ethnic identity relegates them to the very bottom of national society, a society on which they are increasingly dependent for money and goods.

Ecologically the land is becoming less and less fertile. Tons and tons of earth are washed away annually during the rains. Terrace building, which was prevalent in the pre-hispanic period as can be seen by the ancient remains of terraces all over the mountains, has been forgotten in all but a handful of places in Larecaja Province. The ecological damage of erosion can be seen everywhere and is truly impressive.

Pocabayenos say that land they remember ploughing and planting with wheat only twenty five years ago is now a washed-out hillside, scarcely usable for grazing goats; yet with the shrinking amount of productive land the population is constantly growing.

Pocabayenos are very aware of the fact that large families are difficult to maintain and that the children will inherit less if there are many of them. From the day I arrived I was constantly asked what one could do to limit family size. This was asked as much by men as women, and would seem to explode the myth that peasants want more children to help them on the fields. The number of households in Pocabaya has increased by only five in thirty years, but this is due to emigration releasing pressure on the land. They often bemoan the fact that the land they work does not produce enough to support a

# Chapter IV

## Precepts and Practice

Andean dualism, considered to be fundamental to Andean thought and structure<sup>1</sup>, is founded on the principle of reciprocal exchange between complementary pairs. All relationships considered productive and moral by Pocabayenos are rooted in these principles.

The most important social relationship is that of the **chachawarmi**, the couple, and this is used as a paradigm for describing other moral relationships (cf. Harris 1978:24; Silverblatt 1987:29,40). **Chachawarmi** is in turn informed by these relationships: those between trading partners, male and female spirits, people exchanging labour, and so on. These homologous relationships have, however, been affected by contact with the world beyond Pocabaya with its different principles of social organisation. Contemporary Pocabayenos have to deal with this challenge.

In Pocabaya people deal with contact with metropolitan values in different ways. In gender relations there is a tendency, especially among the men, to absorb these values emblematised by the Spanish language and to apply them to social relations in Pocabaya to the disadvantage of women. A similar absorption of Hispanic values is evident in another area of social life: in **comadrazgo** (godparenthood), for example, the relationship has taken on elements of patron-client relationships more typical of Hispanic societies.

What is also clear is that although these tendencies towards the norms of metropolitan culture can be noted, individual actors have a degree of freedom to interpret these precepts and influences differently. Pocabayenos continually apply their cultural models and precepts to new situations and create new meanings for a changing world.

These ideas of relationships based on complementarity and exchange are under some stress in Pocabaya. One principle will be examined where this is the case, marital relations, and a further example, that of **comadrazgo**, will be given later. The elements of hierarchy which are more typical of metropolitan values are conflicting with the egalitarian complementarity of Andean ones. It must be stressed that 'egalitarian'

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Harris (1978, 1980); Isbell (1978); Fioravanti-Molinié (1982); Platt (1986); Schüler (1987); Sallnow (1987); Silverblatt (1987).

when used to describing Andean relations should not be confused with equality of individuals in the Western sense. What is equal in Andean relations is the exchange between two sets of complementarities. There is as much a potential for hierarchy as equality, and there is a constant negotiation between partners in the exchange between these potential states. The negotiation of the relationship is complicated by the fact that there are two sets of cultural values from which the actors can draw. In both **chachawarmi** and **compadrazgo** the issue of resources and access to the external economy and culture plays an important role.

One must not be drawn into the impression that there is a simple conflict between metropolitan values founded on Hispanic culture and language and the values of Pocabaya: what we are dealing with here is how metropolitan values play on Pocabaya values, how they provide a powerful alternative model sanctioned by the wider society and how this alternative model is used by Pocabayenos. Hispanic ideology opens up natural pre-existing fissures in indigenous ideology such as the potential for hierarchy and actors exploit these fissures for their own interests and to make meaningful sense of their own particular social situation.

## Andean Complementarity and Dualism

Complementarity and dualism have been cited as the basic structures of Andean thought and as at the very centre of ideas about gender. The male/female principle as opposing and complementary has been pointed out by various writers on the Andes.<sup>2</sup> This paradigm was even imposed on the structure of the communities of Larecaja up to

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<sup>2</sup> Sallnow (1987); Platt (1986); Harris (1986, 1982, 1978); Isbell (1978); Bastien (1978); Bouysse-Cassagne (1987); Michaux et al. (1989). Arnold, however, argues that the common theme in Andean studies "of complementarity rather than conflict between the sexes has masked the interplay between matrilineal and patrilineal forms of organisation, and in consequence has rendered invisible much of Andean religious practice" (1989:207). Although other writers have discussed a third element in Andean dualism which is the mediation (*taypi*) between the two, Arnold goes further and asserts that in the case of descent and reproduction the "third pathway of mystical kinship" (*ibid.* 207) is an autonomous category. The social organisation of Qaqachaka *ayllu* in Norte de Potosí as described by Arnold (one of corporate patrilineality paralleled by matrilineality) is, however, very different from that of Pocabaya and the surrounding area where corporate groups are much smaller and there is little emphasis on either patrilineality or matrilineality.

the early centuries of Colonial rule, and is still done in the Norte de Potosí<sup>3</sup> today. The communities were divided on a micro level of higher and lower (**alasaya** and **urinsaya**) within the villages as well as on a macrolevel within the ethnic group (**ayllu**) which was divided between the highlands and the valleys. The reproduction of the community depended on the synthesis of the upper (male) part and the lower (female) part. The people of Pocabaya still maintain a vestigial relationship with the people of the highlands that goes beyond the simply economic (see Chapter 1).

The moiety system is now defunct in Larecaja but continues in the area of Norte de Potosí where communities still engage in ritual battles called **tinkus** (cf. Sallnow 1987; Schüler 1987; Platt 1986). The purpose of these battles is to fertilise the earth (**Pachamama**) through the violent conflict of the two halves. They are also a repayment to the tellurian spirits for their fecundity. This is conceived as an **ayni** relationship (Schüler 1987:25-6), a word used more commonly for the exchange of labour between people (see chapter 3). The principle behind **ayni** is reciprocity, and, as the labour between people is to be returned, so must the fertility of the earth be returned with human blood. The copulatory image used in **tinkus**, ritual battles (cf. Schüler 1987:37), is a further indication of the sexual underpinnings of these battles between traditionally opposite but complementary and related groups.

Cosmologically every natural body has a male or female counterpart: the sun (male) is accompanied by the moon (female); the **Pachamama** has her male **achachila** counterparts; the mountain is male and the valley female and so on. The dualistic male/female model is echoed and reproduced in virtually every area of the Aymara system of beliefs. Platt's illustration of how everything has its pair, the notion of **yanantin** in Quechua (Platt 1986), is paralleled in the Aymara concept of **ch'apa**, which also means 'pair', the basic notion being that everything has its counterpart which completes it.

The model is then a dialectic one. The 'male' and 'female' elements combine in various ways to form a whole.

Andean thought is characterised by a conception of reality which integrates two opposites that necessarily harmonise. The harmony of opposites generates a new and superior reality: the "theory of

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<sup>3</sup> A highland area of southern Bolivia.

"development" in the Andean world. Nothing new can exist, nothing better, if it is not the product of the harmonious relation of opposites.

(Michaux *et al*, 1989:21)

In marriage the 'male' and 'female' element are productively combined: they are not equals but complements and without the other half the person is less than a whole. The relation between opposites, be they a married couple, the community and natural resources, 'higher' and 'lower' sections of the communities, or the ecological relationship between Pocabayenos and the people of the altiplano, is both complementary and contradictory. It is complementary because each element logically requires its *ch'apa*, its pair, to be completed and to be effective; contradictory because the one never becomes subsumed under the other - separate identities are maintained. It is in this tension between fusion and fission that lies the productive force of the relationship.

Gender relations in the Andes are traditionally considered to be much more egalitarian (*cf.* Harris 1978; Michaux *et al.* 1989; Silverblatt 1987) than is the case in traditional Mediterranean and Spanish society. Between an Aymara couple, *chachawarmi* (lit. manwoman), there is established what Montes calls a dialectic of complementary opposition (Montes 1989:2. See also Silverblatt 1987:173). The *chachawarmi* on the one hand stands as a single socio-economic and moral unit fulfilling the basic roles of society together. On the other hand, the *chachawarmi* is constituted of two sexually distinct individuals with opposing attributes in a manner characteristic of the sexual dualism of Andean thought (*cf.* Platt 1986): that is, they have a very Swedenborgian concept of sexual union whereby out of two people, one being is created. It is, however, precisely by virtue of their opposition that each partner complements the other to create a coherent and workable whole. No human being is complete without, literally, the other half. It is this gendered model which is echoed and reproduced throughout Aymara thought relating to productive and 'moral' relationships.

We have seen in the previous chapters how the concept of the person is one where the individual is substantiated by his/her relations with household, fictive kin and the community as a whole. It is, in Dumont's terms, an 'holistic' society where "the paramount value lies in society" (1984:94). Here we see that there is no concept of the substantialised individual and that a person is only complete, in a very literal sense, in union with another person.

These Andean ideas of relationships and the person are quite different from those that define relationships in the metropolitan culture of Bolivia. In the Hispanic model difference and hierarchy are stressed much more than complementarity and exchange. The present day dilemma is that dominant Hispanic culture enclaves native Andean culture and is an ever-present source of alternative values.

## The Gender Model Writ Large?

The Aymara model of complementarity informs all social relationships which are often described in terms of relations between men and women in a marriage. That is, everything in the universe has its pair or complement which is described as male or female. However, what is male and female is that very quality of complementarity and productive opposition that governs the universe. This appears as a conundrum but we must be careful not to create a false arrow of signification: the model for humans and the model for the universe are analogues that mutually inform each other. It is perhaps better to conceive of this model in terms of polar values with a particular valency: apart they are inert; when combined they are a source of energy and production.<sup>4</sup>

For Pocabayenos, the relationship they have with the people of the altiplano is conceived in such gendered terms. The higher, 'male', communities of the high mountains are contrasted with the lower, 'female' community of Pocabaya in the valley. Each needs the other. The people of the altiplano depend on communities such as Pocabaya for wheat and maize whereas the Pocabayenos need the people of the altiplano for potatoes, fish and other goods. There is nothing intrinsically male about highlanders or intrinsically female about lowlanders. The analogy hangs on the productive combination between the two. Each community without the other is less than it would be alone. It is not the case that one group colonises or exploits the other but that together they coöperate for their mutual benefit. The basic mode of exchange is **rukuna**<sup>5</sup>, and not cash so the exchange relationship is a moral one. Cash would open up the

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<sup>4</sup> For a somewhat similar interpretation and further discussion of dualism see Allen (1988) and Sallnow (1987).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Sp. *trocar*, to barter but also *rogar*, to request. The word **rukuna**, significantly, is also the word used when making offerings to the autochthonous deities. The word thus combines the element of request whilst containing the element of reciprocity.

opportunity for exploitation, whilst **rukáña** keeps exchange on a more personal and intimate level.

The **ayni** exchange of labour is similarly contrasted to wage labour. Under **ayni**, labour is exchanged for goods or reciprocated in labour at a future date. Wage labour is of an entirely different order and is seen to be an hierarchical relationship, whereas **ayni** is not. Reciprocity is the key element in these exchange relationships. Again and again, these relationships are described in the language of complementarity and exchange. What is at issue here is the exchange of products or labour where the products are not separated from the producer. When exchange is based on money and immediate exchange there is no social relationship between the parties, as in trade in the market village of Sorata, the relationships are conceived and expressed in entirely different terms (see Chapter 1).

The key issue here is not so much whether money is the medium of exchange but the social relationship between traders.<sup>6</sup> That is, the difference between short-term exchange with an anonymous trader, or a long-term one with whom there is a social as well as economic relationship (cf. Parry & Bloch 1989:2). Because the trade in goods between Pocabaya and the **altiplano** spans a range of ecological zones and exchange values are relatively stable, consumers and producers are protected in the long run. To give an example, if in one year the market value of maize falls, Pocabayenos can still exchange maize for fish and potatoes at above the market rate for maize. On the other hand, if potato prices fall, the people from the **altiplano** with whom Pocabayenos have trading relationships can be guaranteed maize and wheat at a more advantageous rate than if they sold their potatoes and tried to buy wheat or maize. In the short term, it may be advantageous for the consumer to buy on the market but, even if s/he does have the cash, s/he may very well face the same problem as the trading partner in another year. Moreover, market prices for food are generally so bad that it is rarely advantageous for a Pocabayenos to sell agricultural products to buy more food: they will almost always get a better deal from barter.

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<sup>6</sup> There is no particularly negative association with money in Pocabaya as money, *qua* source of wealth is seen as being produced by the **achachilas**. See for example the supplication made by Tiudusyu in chapter 6. What is negatively attributed is the illegitimate accumulation of wealth. See also Harris (1988b) and Sallnow (1989b) for a further discussion of mineral and monetary wealth in the Andes.

Reciprocity also defines the relationship Aymaras have with the supernatural as it is through reciprocity that harmony and equilibrium are thought to be maintained.

The harmony of the cosmos is optimal, not only if there is equilibrium between the three great components of the universe [human society, nature and the extra- human] but also within them. Equilibrium between human society and nature: if man respects nature and recognises in the characteristics of its own life and rhythms and adapts himself to them, nature will maintain her equilibrium and give man what he requires of her. Equilibrium between human society and extra-human society: if man respectfully and dutifully attends to the many integrating elements of that world, maintaining a moral conduct and relating himself with them through prayer, offerings and sacrifices, they will be tranquil and offer man their protection, blessing and help. Equilibrium, finally, between the extra-human society and nature: the internal equilibrium of the extra-human society, determined in large part by human society, has its repercussions on the equilibrium of nature. Thus the members of the extra-human society guarantee, in principle, the equilibrium of nature, by way of which she can sustain man.

(van den Berg 1990:159)

All the elements of Aymara cosmology are thus interrelated through relationships of complementarity, reciprocity and exchange. Andean philosophy, argues Silverblatt entailed "a' dialectical' vision of the universe in which opposing forces were viewed as reciprocal and complementary, necessary for the reproduction of society as a whole (1987:173)." These elements are the *sine qua non* of moral relationships and the whole cosmos is sustained by it. It is important to remember that this type of relationship and the harmony of the community is necessary for a productive and fruitful relationship with the powers that guarantee fertility and cosmic well-being. It is a requirement of the tellurian powers that the human community be harmonious and this harmony is achieved through the kind of relationships mentioned above. In turn, the mode by which humans relate to these tellurian beings is also expressed in the language of exchange, reciprocity and complementarity. The model is a recurring one. But this is not to say that it is a rigid one: the actors have room for interpretation and contradiction. When there are elements that contradict the model they are able to make adjustments. These elements of contradiction frequently come from the dominant Hispanic culture of Bolivia. The basic cultural precepts of this culture, especially those relating to gender and power, are fundamentally different to those of Andean culture and increasingly pose a challenge to Andean peoples which they are forced to address.

## Comparable Ideas in Hispanic Culture

The Hispanic idea of gender and the nature of elements is entirely different from that outlined above. Fundamental to the historically dominant elements of European thought since the time of Aristotle is the principle of the indivisibility of nature: the fundamental nature of a being or principle is singular.<sup>7</sup> No principle can contain its own opposite: supernatural beings can not be good and evil; heaven is entirely divorced from hell; body is opposed to soul; men and women are distinct and separate.

I have outlined the philosophical consequences for notions of gender of this elsewhere, particularly in its Roman Catholic and Pauline expression (Canessa 1987). To summarise: the female rooted in her fertility and procreativity is more physical than the more spiritual man. She is a penetrable being, in fact necessarily so to conceive children, and this is an action that contradicts her being. Sex is an activity that pollutes her being in contrast to men for whom sex is an external and thus non-polluting act: she is thus ontologically inferior. Only through the institution of marriage which puts her under the tutelage and protection of a man is her nature controlled and domesticated.

Within the family, women are extensions of men's identity. If any woman is penetrated by another man, by extension the men are too. Hence the preoccupation with virginity and controlling the behaviour of women. What in effect occurs is that men project their own non-spiritual essence on women which must be controlled and dominated externally. Furthermore, the stress on the autonomy of men in contrast to women, casts power relationships in a sexual mould. Unequal relations between men are seen as being comparable to relations between men and women. The ideal man is one who is powerful and autonomous and is a father-figure and master, not only to the members of his own family, but to all those around him who are in a subordinate position such as his godchildren.

Nothing could be more different from Aymara notions of gender and other human relations. In a dominant strand of Christian thought woman does not complete man but threatens to diminish him: the man after marriage still stands as an individual. She,

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<sup>7</sup> See also Dumont's (1984) essay, *A modified view of our origins: the Christian beginnings of modern individualism* for an extended discussion of the influence of Christianity as well as Greek philosophy in establishing the 'exceptional phenomenon' of modern individualism.

however, is subsumed under his authority and identity. The model then, is not one of complementarity and union, but one of domination and separation.

This model extends beyond the gender relationship because it carries over to ideas of power. A man must be autonomous, separate, and impenetrable. His prestige is enhanced by the number of his dependents and subordinates; likewise, to be a subordinate is to be diminished and, in a sense, feminised. The basic model is one of domination and submission; independence of identity and subsumation of identity.

Among the Aymaras of Pocabaya the belief is not that power and resources should be unequally amassed but redistributed through the fiesta system or through **compadrazgo**. To amass more and more wealth and power is considered to be detrimental to the well-being of the community and to invite witchcraft. This is one reason that the maximal authority position in the village, the **Secretario General**, is changed once a year.

These Hispanic ideas of power and gender are known to Pocabayenos and have, in fact, surrounded indigenous Andean society for five hundred years. Andean communities face a challenge from the dominant culture and have to address these different modes of thought. In the institutions of marriage, **chachawarmi**, and godparenthood, **compadrazgo**, there is a tension between traditional and Hispanic which is in constant negotiation.<sup>8</sup>

## Chachawarmi<sup>9</sup>

Complementarity is the underlying principle of gender relations and, consequently, there is a very clear delineation of gender roles and spheres of action. Each has his/her domain and is respected for it. Women are quintessentially of the home: it is their domain. Men, as one informant told me, are just passers by, **pasiri**: they go up and

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<sup>8</sup> See Montes (1989) for a study of the differences between metropolitan 'machista' values and traditional Aymara gender values and the conflict between the two.

<sup>9</sup> **Chacha.warmi**. **Chacha** means man and **warmi**, woman. Thus, literally, 'manwoman'.

down and all around whereas the woman stays in the home.<sup>10</sup> In matters of the household it is the woman's opinion which holds the greatest weight and this was impressed upon me quite emphatically by several people of both genders. This is particularly the case when the men are frequently away and the woman is left with the children to attend the fields. Furthermore, it is the women who tend to control the finances of the household; the reason generally given being that the men are too likely to drink it all away. It was similarly insisted upon that men and women must share all the decisions of the household and that one did not have authority over the other. Even if a man wants to sell his cow he must listen to and consider the advice of his wife.

It is a curious fact that even though the woman is the head of the household, the household is defined as a property-owning unit. This ownership of land is usually in the hands of men who are thus entitled to vote in community matters. The position of the woman as household head is then an internal one. She has authority only within the limits of the household. When this household is represented at the village level or beyond, it is her husband who then has the authority.

When describing to me the differences between men and women Pocabayenos most frequently started with describing the woman's supremacy in the household and then proceed to recount the different responsibilities each person has. I was also frequently told how that within the *chachawarmi* the man and the woman are equal partners. The consistency among both men and woman in impressing this upon me was quite remarkable and invariably prefaced a conversation about gender with me. How the reality departs from this ideal model, both emically and etically, shall be dealt with below.

## A Day in the Life

A typical day for both members of a couple will illustrate the roles each has within the household.

The day begins at about five o'clock and Rimiju and Ankustina are often woken by the baby crying. The baby is fed and the whole family slowly wakes up. Rimiju and

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Carter & Mamani 1982:132 - they quote an Aymara saying that whereas the woman is the key to the household, the man is but a visitor. Catherine Allen in Sonqo also notes that men are typically described for their transience with respect to the house (Allen 1988:79).

Ankustina sleep with their children Makariu who is several months old and their daughter, Waliya, who is almost two years old. At times, their other son Rikardu (7) will also sleep with them.

The family slowly wakes up and they all lay in bed talking to each other as it slowly gets light. The two other girls, Yula (11) and Lusi (14) sleep in another bed with their grandmother or on the floor on top of sheepskins and blankets. After Makariu is fed and settled down, Ankustina gives the baby to Yula who takes care of him whilst she goes into the kitchen to prepare the coffee.

The kitchen is a small adobe room attached to the outside of the house. There is a small fire and a low shelf for pots and pans under which live the guinea pigs (**wank'u**) who feed on scraps. There is no chimney and the smoke escapes through the holes in the roof. The fire is lit and Ankustina gets the water to boil in a blackened kettle. She adds a tablespoon of coffee and five of sugar.

By this time all are up and they either come into the kitchen to drink their coffee (**junt'uma**: literally 'hot water') or it is drunk in the main room. If there is any bread, this is eaten with the coffee. Everyone gets a cup and Yula or Lusi will cool it down for their younger siblings by blowing on it. This weak and strongly sweetened coffee is what babies are weaned on four months or so after birth.

The hours between **junt'uma** and breakfast (**almwirsu**: from Sp. **almuerzo**, lunch) is spent getting ready for the day. This is a good time to visit anyone if something is needed to be communicated as almost everyone is guaranteed to be at home.

Whilst Yula takes care of the baby, Ankustina begins the preparation of **almwirsu**. This is usually a big soup with pasta and vegetables. The vegetables depend on the time of year but potatoes are usually included and it very common to have lima beans (**jawasa**). Other vegetables could be peas and carrots. In wealthier households, a few pieces of meat may be put in the pot. In poorer ones the meal may be little more than potatoes in boiled water with chili sauce. The chili peppers are ground with a semi-circular pestle on a flat stone. This hot sauce accompanies every meal.

At about eight o'clock, the whole family enters the kitchen to eat their bowls of soup. The kitchen is very small, but the whole family manages to squeeze in one way or another. It is a very cosy and intimate atmosphere with the fire glowing in one corner and the whole family close together. This is especially the case when it is cold or raining outside.

Ankustina begins preparing lunch once breakfast is done. She has usually already boiled the potatoes and possibly the maize as well. All that remains to be done is to make the maize pancakes (*kaswira*) which she does in a frying pan.

Lunch is packed in a *tari*, a woven cloth, and the whole family sets out for the fields. Lusi, the oldest daughter, takes the sheep and heads for the higher lands of Pocobaya where she will spend the whole day making sure they are amply fed. On the hills she will meet her friends and they will graze the sheep together.

The rest of the family takes their tools and the cow and go to one of their fields. The cow is tethered to a stake and grazes in the immediate area or is given maize stalks to eat.

If a field is to be ploughed this is done by Rimiju with a pair of oxen he borrows from a friend or relative. He ploughs up and down the field and is followed by Ankustina and Yula who drop the seeds into the furrows and cover them up with earth by using their hoes (*cf.* Harris 1978:30). If there is much work to be done, the sheep will be grazed by someone else and Lusi will join her family for this harder work.

The baby is often left under a makeshift tent of clothes and *awayus* (carrying cloths). If he starts crying Yula takes care of him rather than her mother who is a stronger worker than her young daughter. During the day, taking care of the baby is Yula's responsibility apart from breast-feeding, of course. Nevertheless, as soon as the baby is fed he is given back to Yula who will carry him on her back in her *awayu* and rock him to sleep.

The smaller children, Rikardu and Waliya, will also help in as much as they can. They are not asked to, but will take a small hoe and play at hoeing on the edges of the field. When they are old enough to do some work, they will seed the furrows at their own pace until they get tired or bored. No pressure is put on anybody to work harder than they want to. They are encouraged to participate but the smaller children especially rest as much as they want or leave the work all together.

At about two o'clock the whole family will break for lunch, *mirinta* (*cf.* Sp. *mirienda*). The *taris* are opened out and everyone eats the potatoes, maize and the pancakes together. This picnic is enjoyed by all and the break can last as long as an hour. Work continues until it is finished or all are tired or it is getting too late. There is much flexibility in the hours and intensity of the work. There are some times when there is a great pressure to finish a particular field in time and this is generally the

planting of the maize before the rains. On these occasions the work is done in larger teams of people from different households, but normally there is little pressure on work.

In the evening everyone returns to the house. The baby will be fed and given to Yula to put down and Ankustina will once again enter the kitchen and begin preparing the evening meal. Other members of the family will help with peeling vegetables and once again this is done according to one's ability. The smaller children take a long time and are quite ineffective but this is dealt with complete tolerance as with agricultural labour. After dinner the whole family settles down to go to bed and there is a relaxed period of talk and play. Rimiji will not normally get involved with the cooking: he will usually rest whilst the meal is being made. The meal may include a broth but is principally rice or potatoes with chili sauce.

The fact that women have to continue with work in the kitchen when they return from the fields was given as an example of male superiority to me by a man, and by a woman as an example of the corruption of **chachawarmi** equality.<sup>11</sup> Both people started off by impressing upon me the equal nature of the relationship between men and women. However, when I inquired further and less directly, both stated that the relationship is not as egalitarian as it should be. Ustakyu said, "When I return from the fields, I go to the room and rest. [My wife] has to keep on working in the kitchen. I suppose then that men are superior (*juk'amp walurani*<sup>12</sup>) to women because they do less work."

Phlura also began our conversation by asserting the equality of the **chachawarmi**: "The man and the woman are the same; neither one or the other has more authority." This almost formulaic response was followed later in the conversation by the rueful comment: "It is not really like that, you know: we have to work harder than the men and they say we work the same amount. Some of the men beat their wives when they are drunk - there is no equality." Phlura said that although people say that **chachawarmi** relations are equal the reality is quite different. It would seem that **chachawarmi** equality is an ideology that obscures a not so egalitarian reality even though the ideal is apparently one shared by all.

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<sup>11</sup> Harris (1978:31) notes that this 'double shift' means that women ultimately control consumption through their particular rôles as cooks.

<sup>12</sup> Literally, having more value or worth. The root of this word for value, *walura*, come from the Spanish **valor**.

## Models of Gender

The man is in charge of the cattle and sheep as well as the land; the woman is in charge of the house and pigs, guinea pigs and chickens. A woman's duties are to take care of the children, to cook, and to attend to the fields doing such work as weeding or tilling the soil, *jataña*. A man, on the other hand, must plough, take care of the structure of the house and be responsible for the cash income of the household, a responsibility which keeps him away from the village for many months of the year working in the gold mines or in the large agricultural operatives of the *yungas*. It is accepted that in certain circumstances people are obliged to do the work of the other sex. For example, Justu and his son live alone and cook for each other. He often complained that he needed a wife and frequently cited the fact that he had to cook as an illustration of his plight which engendered more pity and humorous teasing than scorn among other Pocabayenos. The source of the humour is the anomaly of the situation of a household without a woman.

Some agricultural tasks are almost always done by men. Foremost among these is ploughing, be it with a team of oxen or the Andean foot plough when the field is too small for a team of oxen. The same is true of breaking the ground with the staff. The spreading of manure is also generally done by men. These tasks are considered to be too difficult or strenuous for women or simply inappropriate. All these tasks have in common the fact that they can be done without bending the back whilst all the agricultural tasks deemed appropriate for women involve bending to the ground with a hoe. Nevertheless, if there is only hoeing to do, the men will do it as much as the women. Hoeing is also a task that women can do by themselves when the men are away in the mines or the *yungas*.

As a general rule, though, all definitively male tasks can, under special circumstances, be performed by women and vice versa. Men sometimes herd and I was told that on some occasions women even plough. This, however, does not detract from the gender-identification of a particular task, it is just testament to the flexibility one must have in life and perhaps the recognition that gender differences are not absolute. I was told, for example, that men did not know how to spin, they were incapable of spinning because spinning is quintessentially a woman's task. One day I saw my friend Jirman spinning early in the morning before going off to the fields. He spun with ease and

expertise and I expressed surprise that he was not only spinning but doing it so efficiently. "Yes", he replied to my puzzlement, "Only women know how to spin; but sometimes I like to spin too." And that was that.

Governing conjugal relationships is the marital institution known as **chachawarmi** (couple) under which both partners in marriage are dependent upon each other and share the responsibility of the running of the household: all major decisions are shared by both. As one Pocabayeno put it: Yes, in some couples it is the case that the man makes the decisions but if anything goes wrong, he must take all the blame. If the decisions and the responsibility for them are shared, the woman cannot blame it on the man if anything goes wrong.

In general, a large part of what makes a good man is his good, fertile and industrious wife whilst a large part of what makes a good woman is a hard-working husband who can provide for her and her children.

Central to the understanding of gender roles is the notion of **suma jaqi** which simply means 'good person'. The notion of **suma jaqi** can be seen in terms of the total socialisation of a person, **jaqichasiña**, which can be literally translated as 'to make a person of oneself'.<sup>13</sup> As already mentioned, the process of socialisation or, literally, humanisation, starts with birth, speech, the first hair-cutting (**ritucha**), but especially with marriage and the fulfilment of gender roles<sup>14</sup>. In fact, **jaqichasiña** is another way of describing a wedding although **kasirasiña** is rather more common. Everyone should aspire to be a **suma jaqi** and for both men and women it is essential to be married.

For a woman to be considered to be **suma jaqi** (a good person), she must above all be a good wife and mother. This entails much hard work in the fields, especially when her husband is away, and ensuring the efficient managing of the household. It does not, however, involve her leaving the community as it does her husband. She herself will adopt no **cargos** (political office and fiesta sponsorship), although will share in the labour behind the execution of some of them, particularly those that involve sponsoring fiestas; yet, whilst her labour is a ready resource, her husband is obliged to earn the money to finance the project. She must show skill in managing his income, but he must provide it. So even though she takes on a far greater share of the burden of labour for running a

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<sup>13</sup> **Jaqi.cha.si.ña.** **Jaqi**, person; **cha**, to make; **si**, reflexive and **ña** infinitive. Thus: 'to make a person of oneself'.

<sup>14</sup> The process of **jaqichasiña** has been dealt with more fully in the chapter two.

successful and prestigious household, the goals she must reach under the value system are at least attainable within that system unlike her husband who is required to go beyond the moral community of Pocabaya and the **achachilas** and its respective values to meet those very demands the community imposes upon him. It must be noted that Pocabayeno practice is quite different from many other parts of Bolivia where women are very much involved in the cash economy especially as market traders.

There are other models of womanhood which should be noted. One I heard frequently from men revolved around the mysterious **warmimarka**, a women's village in the mountains. This village, I was told, was inhabited only by women and their children. The male children were killed just before reaching adulthood. These women live from herding and farming and are constantly on the look-out for men to abduct and take back to the village. There the victim is raped repeatedly so that the women may be inseminated, the man is then killed. I was unable to ascertain the origin of this story but it would seem to come from the existence of many villages on the **altiplano** where most of the able-bodied men have left, leaving only the women, children and the old.

The notorious rapacious sexuality of these women from the fabled **warmimarka** is paralleled in the myth of the **japiñuñu**<sup>15</sup>. The **japiñuñu** is a very beautiful woman with enormous pendulous breasts. She inhabits the deserted areas near rivers and entices innocent men to approach her by entralling them. Once they are in range, she traps them between her breasts and crushes them to death.

## **Widowhood: The Incomplete Adult**

To be unmarried is not only to be in a very difficult position economically, but to be socially and morally incomplete. Harris notes that for the Laymi, the unmarried are buried with a symbolic companion for the after-life: a hen for the woman and a cock for the man. They also have a much harder journey to the land of the dead (*cf.* Harris 1982:87). This clearly indicates the notion that people are not complete until they are unified with someone from the opposite sex in marriage.

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<sup>15</sup> In Aymara the word **japi** means pregnant and **ñuñu** means breast as it does in Quechua. In Quechua, however, **japichiy** means to trap (Girault 1988:89). In view of the mythology surrounding this creature the Quechua seems more appropriate and the term can be translated as 'the women who traps with her breasts'.

Widowhood is something that is very difficult for Pocabayenos and they try to remarry if it is possible. This seems to be in contrast to the practice in other parts of the Andes. In highland Peru, Ochoa reports that widows and widowers do not generally remarry and that it would be considered unseemly to do so (Ochoa 1973). In Pocabaya remarriage is not only approved of but encouraged. Only a couple of months after Phlura's husband died, all the adults attended a funeral in the neighbouring village of Khacha. Idmundu, whose wife died two years previously, was also in attendance. It seemed quite obvious to all Pocabayenos that Idmundu and Phlura should get together but they both seemed reluctant to take the first step. This was much talked about, almost from the day Phlura became a widow. In the evening of the first day of the funeral, some Pocabaya men and women who were in a mirthful mood and fortified by alcohol, set upon both Phlura and Idmundu and locked them in the room. They were not let out until the following morning. Everyone was very pleased when, after a few weeks Idmundu moved into Phlura's house and took up the respective responsibilities of the **chachawarmi**. Idmundu and Phlura worked their fields together; Phlura, and not Idmundu's daughter, cooked for him and on festive occasions they danced together as a couple; and, on those occasions that demanded the sharing of food in a **wayk'asi**, it was she who cooked the **wayk'asi**, dishes which he shared with the other men.

## The Antinomy of Values

Aymara culture does not exist in a social or economic vacuum and has been exposed to an Hispanic system of social relations for almost five hundred years. Their own institutions have been affected by this exposure and we shall examine the effect of this influence on a principal social institution, **chachawarmi**.

### Portrait of a Marriage

Even though people are very clear about the egalitarian and complementary nature of marriage, not every couple interprets this in the same way. Cultural precepts relating to language, education and intelligence are similarly understood and interpreted differently by different people. The same model can be applied logically to arrive at a very different conclusion. A very good example of this is the issue of language. The

importance of language as defining humans is a basic precept of Aymara culture. It can be used to argue that women are inferior because they have less language, i.e., they do not speak Spanish, or to argue that they are more in touch with native culture, and by implication, with the supernatural beings, since they speak more Aymara than men do. However egalitarian cultural precepts are, they are still open to differing interpretation through the use of other cultural precepts to different logical conclusions.

The following three portraits of marriages in Pocabaya illustrate the variety of relationships that can exist in a small community even though all, at least superficially, accept the basic principles governing *chachawarmi*. These examples are from three couples in more or less the same stage of their lives: they are all relatively young, married, and with young children. The differences in their marriages then, can not be accounted for by generational differences.

### **Pastuku and Wunipasi**

Pastuku and Wunipasi are a young couple, both in their late twenties, who live in their own house in one of the highest parts of the village. Pastuku spent seven years working in the gold mines and a couple of years ago discovered he had silicosis. He now spends almost all of his time in Pocabaya although he will occasionally go to the yungas and work in the rice fields there. He is an easy-going and moderate man.

Wunipasi's parents are both still living, as is her grandmother. Her parents' compound is very close to where she lives with Pastuku and both couples get on very well together. Pastuku is somewhat estranged from his family as his father remarried and his second wife is, according to Pastuku, rather hostile to the children of her husband's first marriage. Wunipasi is a warm but quiet woman and likes very much that her husband spends so much time in Pocabaya unlike other men even though this means they are poorer.

Pastuku and Wunipasi epitomise *chachawarmi* as it has been described to me by many Pocabayenos. They work together in the fields almost every day although on some occasions Pastuku will spend the day alone looking for firewood or, occasionally, grazing the few sheep they have. As a couple they exchange labour (*ayni*) with Wunipasi's parents as well as her sister and her husband.

Pastuku and Wunipasi have three children who appear happy and well-cared for. The eldest daughter plays a large role in the care of her younger sister and brother who are a toddler and baby.

Pastuku does not like to drink and this is a quality much admired by Wunipasi. "He is a good man. He drinks during the festive occasions but never too much. He is not like Anklisa who will drink abusively. He does not like to drink: 'It makes me sick,' he says. He does not hit me when he is drunk. When he drinks too much he just falls asleep!" she once told me, laughingly.

Both concurred that all important decisions were openly shared. I observed them on many occasion discussing matters of importance, always with a genuine interest of hearing the opinion of the other and considering it carefully. It was rarely the case that one partner tried directly to persuade the other of a course of action; rather, each would raise various points surrounding the situation and together they would move toward agreement. Their relationship in general is characterised by a depth of warmth and affection which impressed me, as affection between couples is not normally evident to the outsider in Pocabaya.

I think the fact that Pastuku spends so much time in Pocabaya is significant for explaining in part the depth of understanding each has for the other. Moreover, he is not continually exposed, as are so many other Pocabayenos, to a very different model of gender relations that conflicts with the basic *chachawarmi* model outlined above.

### **Rusindu and Paula**

Rusindu and Paula are very different from Pastuku and Wunipasi in that Rusindu spends a large amount of time away from Pocabaya. He is involved in gold mining but earns most of his money as a travelling salesman. It is rumoured that he has a house and another family in La Paz. He speaks fluent Spanish and comes to Pocabaya as little as possible: the bare minimum to insure that the fields are worked so that he need not forfeit his right to it.

Paula was attracted to Rusindu for his worldly ways and the fact that he always had so much money when he was in Pocabaya. She followed him once to the gold mines to live with him there but he sent her back after a while to look after the fields. They have five children between one and ten years old.

She lives in fear of her husband. He is so rarely at home that she does not want to anger him when he does come. When he does return he never gives her enough money to feed the children who subsist on the most basic of diets. They will often feed on nothing more than a few potatoes boiled in water.

When he is here, we eat better but he is soon gone. If I ask him for money, he beats me. When he is drunk he always beats me. He beats me badly whatever I say and do. Truly, he beats me hard. I would leave the house when I saw that he was going to get drunk but that would only make him angrier. When I came back he beat me very hard. He beats me very hard.

Paula also told me that when her husband beats her, he swears at her in Spanish but she is unable to understand what he says.

Family violence is a known phenomenon in Pocabaya but rarely as extreme as between Rusindu and Paula (*cf.* Harris 1978:34-5). There are normally sanctions from family and especially **compadres** against such beatings. One woman in Pocabaya successfully denounced her husband to the police which resulted in his being rather heavily fined. Although Paula does have her **padrinos** in Pocabaya, who took them are reluctant to help because they know they are unlikely to be reciprocated either in kind or labour by Rusindu. His aggressive character partly accounts for the fact that she is estranged from her own family. Without such support she has very limited options other than to gather her children to go and stay with her sister in Sorata which she does on occasion, especially when she has run out of food.<sup>16</sup>

There may be many reasons for Rusintu's violence against his wife but I believe it is no coincidence that he is probably the most acculturated Pocabayeno.<sup>17</sup> He has mixed feelings about Pocabaya ranging from maudlin sentimentality to disdain. Much of the disdain, it seems, is taken out on his wife whom he described as worthless, and uneducated. As evidence of this he told me that she did not even speak Spanish.

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<sup>16</sup> The incidence of family violence is notoriously higher in the Aymara suburbs of La Paz where there are much fewer family links and where large numbers of men are unemployed. In such a situation the men fulfil neither the gender rôles imposed by the dominant culture or of their own culture. Health and other workers in these suburbs have also told me that there is also a very high incidence of violence against children.

<sup>17</sup> Silverblatt suggests (after Guaman Poma) that there was a breakdown of kinship and marriage norms "generated by the colonial forces which gnawed away at the traditional balance in Andean life" and in particular led to a greatly increased incidence of drunkenness and violence against women than before the Conquest (1987:145).

## Anklisa and Jasinta

Anklisa and Jasinta are known for having a good marriage. Anklisa is lucky for he is able to make money whilst remaining in Pocabaya. He does this by making cloth dolls and selling them in La Paz. His wife helps him with this and his daughter, who is sixteen, makes dolls in her own right. Anklisa and Jasinta are then rather fortunate in being able to acquire cash without leaving the village. They have six children aged between one and sixteen years old. As virtually everyone else I spoke to, Anklisa and Jasinta both started any conversation I began about **chachawarmi** with the usual statement about equality.

Anklisa frequently mentioned his aspiration to move to Sorata. He gave several reasons: The burden of having so many **compadres** was too great as all the money he earned ended up being spread around to others; Sorata is a more civilised place, more advanced. He often spoke of the advancement that Sorata represented and that the whole family would speak Spanish. Spanish, he said, is the language of Sorata. In fact, people tend to be largely bilingual in Sorata and there are probably more Aymara monolinguals in Sorata than Spanish monolinguals. After the move to Sorata, no longer would his wife wear traditional dress and would instead wear dresses (**de vestido**) in the manner of the Hispanics. His motive was not poverty as he was one of the wealthiest men in the village but rather the desire to become more 'advanced' as he put it.

Jasinta had a very different opinion and although she conceded that there would be advantages to living in Sorata, she would miss her family and the other women of the village. She did not like the people of Sorata, she said.

When I spoke to Anklisa about who took the decisions in the household, he replied typically enough by saying that the decisions were shared equally by both him and his wife, an opinion his wife later confirmed. I also knew it personally to be the case that they discussed everything together before acting on anything significant; but, unlike Pastuku and Wunipasi, Anklisa tended to speak with more authority and expect his wife to recognise that in general his opinion had more weight than hers. Nevertheless, they did discuss matters carefully and Jasinta did have the opportunity to make her point and have it heard.

These three examples illustrate a range of relationships from an almost idealised model of **chachawarmi** to a marriage in which the man clearly terrorises his wife. I do not think it is coincidental that the degree of inequality within the marriages correlates

with the exposure of the husband to the outside world. One important recurring factor used by men to denigrate women which came up in a number of contexts as well as the last two **chachawarmis** above, is the issue of language; specifically the ability or inability to speak Spanish.

## Language

The set of ideas that surround the institution of **chachawarmi** have been influenced by the world outside, the world of Hispanic culture. Principal among the ideas that have entered is the concept of **mimuria** (mind, intelligence - Sp: memoria-memory) [cf. Cole 1969:28], a word that is not only Spanish in origin but in sentiment. We must again not underestimate the significance of the fact that the word is Spanish in origin and that this may suggest a more Hispanic, rather than Aymara, orientation. The association between language and humanity has been used to undermine the position of women by claiming that their inability to speak Spanish shows a fundamental lack in their nature. There is a certain logic to this, but, as we shall see, it is not the only logical application of this cultural precept to gender relations.

### Language and Human Nature

To appreciate the importance of **mimuria** one must first understand the importance of language in the definition of the human. Animals are distinguished from humans by their lack of souls. Animals do not talk, I was told, because they do not have a soul: and the soul is the centre of human linguistic ability. The notion of speech being a quintessentially human activity, the ability for which is located in the soul, is also reported by Harris whose data for the Laymi (another Aymara-speaking group) corresponds closely with that for Pocabaya:

The Laymis represent the process by which a new-born individual becomes a fully-socialised human being in terms of the child's progressive ability to speak.

(Harris 1982:72)

In Pocabaya, the ability to speak is also marked by the *ritucha* (hair-cutting ceremony), before which a child is almost never referred to by its name but simply referred to as *wawa*, baby.

Cole also stresses the importance of language as defining humanity for the Aymara of Lake Titicaca (Cole 1969). It is through our souls that we can communicate with each other and enter into those relationships of exchange and mutuality that define us as people (*jaqi*). "The root of [the interchange of self] is the human soul possessed by any person of either sex, and it is this interchange that enables us to understand a person who is speaking (*naya*) or a person who is spoken to (*juma*)" (Cole 1969:33).

The soul then, is the source of language and speech, but women, it is said, have less ability to speak than men. This is also reported by Harris (1982) In Pocabaya it is quite clear that women speak less publicly than men. A woman who expresses herself in a public situation is likely to be criticised as much by the women as by men and to be given the epithet *bocona* (Sp.- big-mouth). The reasons given for the fact that women don't speak in public were generally divided between those that suggested that women had nothing important to say and those that said that women were afraid of the ridicule and criticism that would be poured upon them. A similar situation appears to be the case in Sonqo in Peru where "men did not like having women enter the public forum, and the women did not like entering it" (Allen 1988:120).

## The Social Application of Language

Anklisa (above), after describing to me the egalitarian and coöperative nature of **chachawarmi** relations, told me that men have more **mimuria** than women so their words hold more weight. **Mimuria** in Aymara usage is roughly translatable as intelligence but of a particular kind: it relates particularly with the kind of intelligence needed to deal with the outside world. **Mimuria** appears to be a direct translation into Spanish of the Aymara word *amuya* which means simultaneously memory and intelligence. **Amuya** is not used as frequently by Pocabayenos although several of the older people seemed to prefer it to **mimuria**. One can only conjecture as to why an Aymara word for intelligence would be replaced by a Spanish one which is a poor translation and has a different meaning to Spanish-speakers. It is possible that the shift is due to a different appreciation of what is needed to live successfully in the world and

a recognition of the need to have access to metropolitan modes of education and symbolic structures. There is yet another Aymara word for intelligence, **p'iqini**, (lit: having head) which comes much closer to our idea of common sense: the ability to deal with problems in a wise and reasonable way. In this case then, the couple held to the values of the conjugal relationship but these were evidently tempered by the fact that it was considered by both of them that he had more **mimuria**.

Speaking of his wife, Anklisa said that, as she spoke no Spanish, she had no **mimuria**. When she travels out of Pocabaya she is like a dog (**anujama**) or baby (**wawajama**) who understands nothing.<sup>18</sup> The women in Sorata have **mimuria** because they can speak Spanish and the women in La Paz even more so.

In Anklisa's opinion Jasinta's inability to deal with the outside world undermines her position in Pocabaya. In terms of the norms of Pocabaya, Anklisa's wife has fulfilled all the obligations to being a full and respected woman and to have earned the right to be an equal partner in a **chachawarmi**. It is the values of the outside world, values that are not relevant to life in Pocabaya, that undermine her position. Jasinta's inability to speak Spanish is hardly a handicap in her daily life for even on those rare occasions when she does go to Sorata she is unlikely to come across someone who does not speak Aymara; yet, her inability to speak Spanish is a sufficient excuse for her husband to denigrate her position and deny her the respect that she is due according to the traditional ideas of **chachawarmi**. When speaking with Anklisa, it was clear that his ability to speak Spanish coupled with his knowledge of the outside world not only gave him more authority (in his opinion) when discussing matters that had to do with the ways of the metropolitan culture, but all aspects of daily life as well.

Jasinta, despite complying with all the demands of her gender role as dictated by her culture, finds herself nevertheless in a denigrated position. However, Anklisa faces exactly the same problem: as a wealthy man he has many **compadrazgo** obligations which are constantly preventing him from accumulating wealth in the way favoured by dominant Bolivian society and this is why he wants to leave Pocabaya for Sorata to escape from the demands of his **compadres**. Jasinta's primary cultural and moral orientation is Pocabaya but she finds she is undermined by outside criteria. Anklisa, on the other hand, who has a much more Hispanic orientation, finds that his position in the

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<sup>18</sup> This is yet another indication that pre-speech infants are not considered properly human (cf. Harris 1980).

outside world is undermined by elements from within his natal culture. In such a situation, the relationship is inevitably put under some strain.

One way that this conflict is expressed by Anklisa is through a discourse on language and intelligence. He takes native precepts and adapts them to an Hispanic world view thereby undermining his wife. There are other ways, however, to deal with Spanish-speaking values as we shall see below. Various parties manipulate cultural categories to give meaning to their own particular conditions.

The issues surrounding language and gender go beyond relations within an individual **chachawarmi** to community relations as a whole. All land-owning men are expected to attend public meetings; whilst only those women representing their husbands generally attend. Absent husbands are represented by their wives who sit on the floor; the men sit on the school benches (*cf.* Platt 1986; Allen 1988). The institution of **chachawarmi** is strong enough that women have a considerable influence over their husbands but, in public meetings where everything is decided before the meeting is closed, they have a very limited chance to influence the course of events. Some women expressed anger and frustration at this situation but no one seemed willing to run the risk of approbation to change it. One man also expressed regret that women kept quiet because very often they had very good and reasonable opinions which they expressed after the meetings by which time it was too late.

The women were afraid to speak because they might be laughed at. Several of them thought that much of what the men said was clearly rubbish and were quite frustrated at not being able to say anything until afterwards, when it was too late. Irkulyanu articulated the view of many men when he said:

They only have a little intelligence, just a little; they have very little thought. They do not know how to think. After the meeting, once it is over, they are able to speak a little, then they can speak. Capacitation/enablement for women does not exist.

Amuyuw jan utjkiti mawk'ita istixa wali minus pinsatu.  
Janiw pinsañ yatipkiti después de reunion paskix ukatak mawk'ita parlañ yatipxarakiw iski akanxa.  
Kapasitasiunaw jan utjkiti warminakatakix.

It is interesting to note how many Spanish words he uses, such as: **minus pinsatu** (menos pensado) which means in the way he is using the phrase, less thought; and **kapasitasiuna** (capacitación) which literally means capacitación or the act of enabling and sometimes also has the connotation of empowerment. It can also quite simply mean 'training'. **Capacitación** is a buzz word among those organisations in Bolivia that seek to improve the lot of the Indians. It can adequately be translated as the ability to deal with the structures of the modern world.

Yet in other communities, women do speak out and make their opinions heard. Why was this the case? The answer given was that these women, like the women from Sorata, had more **mimuria**. For instance, in the communities of the **altiplano** which are not too far from La Paz, there has been general education for several decades and of a quality far superior to the three years that Pocabayenos typically enjoy. I have seen women in these communities take active part in village discussions and even make formal speeches, an act which would be inconceivable in Pocabaya. After three years in the village school, barely a single child can be said to speak Spanish despite the fact that for the whole three years that is the language in which they have been taught. **Mimuria**, as it is contemporarily conceived, is not only the ability to engage in exchange with other people but, increasingly, with the outside world. Once again the values of the outside have invaded and transformed indigenous concepts. **Mimuria** has come to mean the kind of intelligence one needs to deal with the challenge offered by the metropolitan culture.

In village meetings the language used is not Spanish, but Aymara. At the same time, however, to give greater force to one's words, **mimuria** must be demonstrated. This is typically done by a liberal use of Hispanicisms which are beyond almost all the women of the village and a good number of the men as well. The Spanish that is used is often very poorly pronounced and frequently entirely incorrect. It is also the case that when Spanish words are used correctly, they are used to express concepts for which a much better Aymara word exists. The result is to exclude those of the community, above all the women, who have little or no exposure to the Spanish language. The posturing done by so many men leaves many bewildered but frequently unable to challenge the speaker for fear of exposing one's ignorance and lack of sophistication.

Such exclusion of women from public discussions is quite different from the egalitarian model of the **chachawarmi**. The issues dealt with in village meetings usually affect the running of the village and any matter of importance affecting the village that may arise. One common complaint among male Pocabayenos is that the interests of the

household do not often coincide with the interests of the village as a whole: people are insular and not sufficiently communal in spirit (see Chapter 3). Yet, it appears that part of this opposition is due to the fact that women, who have such a large say in household matters, are effectively disenfranchised from community matters. Moreover, one must consider that village meetings are held on those few occasions of the year when most men are present and matters need to be decided. Women, who are in Pocabaya throughout the year, deal with issues on a daily basis and through their respective kinship networks and friends. A debate where people stand up and try and state their point through posturing and obfuscation is quite alien to the way most women reach decisions within their networks and with their husbands: much more emphasis is laid on the sharing of positions and the emergence of consensus than outright debate. To speak publicly is anyway not considered appropriate behaviour in women.

The argument that men are superior to women by virtue of their ability to speak Spanish is based on Aymara precepts about language and human nature. This is, however, not the only conclusion one can reach about the ability to speak Spanish.

It was once ironically commented to me that only the women and old men could still speak Aymara in the village because most of the men seemed incapable of uttering a sentence without using Spanish words. This was from a woman who had overheard my conversation with a man in which he told me that as women could not speak Spanish, they had less **mimuria** than men. She disagreed entirely and turned his argument on its head. Without denying the importance of language, she noted that women speak more and better Aymara. If Aymara traditions and identity are valued then this fact implies that women have more authenticity and authority.

These two contrasting positions reveal that people can logically apply their cultural precepts to address their own particular points of views and needs. One can argue that men have more value for their ability to speak Spanish but this is only so if Hispanic culture is particularly valued. If it is not, then the argument has no place. Similarly, the ability to speak Aymara purely and well can be used to support the idea of female superiority if Aymara culture is valued. The reality is of course much more complicated than a simple Aymara/Hispanic dichotomy and different people will place themselves in different positions along a continuum depending on their personal history, gender, and predilections according to different situations.

## The Expansion of Authority to Another Sphere

### Tiudusyu

When the *yatiri*, seer, is asked for his opinion on the possible coming of the rains, he speaks with an authority which is accepted by all. He gives counsel and performs rituals on a wide range of spiritual and health matters. Even in the most quotidian situations, Tiudusyu, the *yatiri*, is treated with the kind of respect and deference not normally accorded others. The respect accorded him because of his profession carries on to other situations where his particular expertise is not demanded.

In village meetings he will sit with erect carriage and visible dignity; yet he usually sits silent unless he is asked a direct question. Tiudusyu speaks no Spanish at all and his hearing is somewhat impaired. The discussions in the meetings often confuse him, more so when much Spanish is used. He welcomes the ability of Pocabayenos to speak Spanish as this will afford some protection when dealing with the outside world. He is clearly saddened, however, at the lowering of the status of Aymara in people's eyes.

### Phlura

Phlura, also commands respect through her strength of character and wisdom, and within her network of **compadres** she will speak with authority to men as much as women. The success of her husband in village politics including the successful termination of feudal dues to the **haciendado** is due in no small part to her encouragement and persuasion. The death of her husband, however, deprived her of a formal vehicle through which to express her position in village meetings: her 'voice' is no longer formally heard and her attempts to speak out in her own right have met with some resistance and criticism even though, as a landowner now, she has as much formal right as anyone to speak.

Despite the fact that there are several men who would like to have her opinions heard in meetings, there is a large number of people who resist the public speech of women. This group also includes a large number of women, some of whom have for many years resented Phlura's prominent position and would clearly like to see her put in her place. Since her remarriage, Phlura has once again begun to consolidate her position and may end up in a position even stronger than before. Since her new husband's father stubbornly refuses to give him any land before he dies, she is therefore the only one of

the couple who is a landowner. Nevertheless, her room for manoeuvre is hampered by the Hispanic bias of much of the rhetoric in village meetings as well as the Pocabaya resistance to the public speech of women.

This is not to say that these obstacles are insurmountable: there are communities in the *altiplano* where women have reached the position of **Secretario General**, and given a favourable constellation of personalities and circumstances, there is no reason to assume that such an eventuality could not come to pass in Pocabaya. Nevertheless, another avenue which Phlura exploits is heavy and persuasive lobbying outside the meeting. In this way she can attempt to persuade people of her views without actually standing up and stating her own in public. The advantage of this strategy is that it is difficult for her to be publicly contradicted when she has no formal and stated position to contradict.<sup>19</sup>

One must be careful, however to overestimate the importance of the public meetings as arenas for the exercise of power. They do give mature men an edge in the control of community affairs (*cf.* Allen 1988:120) but they may be more fruitfully seen as a stage in a process. It is frequently the case that by the time matters get to the public meeting they have already been mooted, discussed, argued and a whole range of subtle pressures brought to bear on younger men by women and older men to ensure that other views are heard.

Although the syndicalist model of community organisation imposed on Aymara communities since the Agrarian Reform has spread throughout Bolivia with a profound effect, we can see that a less formal system of decision-making can still with some success be put in to effect although one must note the fact that their views can finally be ignored in the public meetings. Tiudusyu and Phlura are respected members of the community in their own right and can and will express their views outside the formal arena of public meetings which will, in a number of circumstances, be taken into account.

### **The School Teacher**

In contrast to people such as Tiudusyu the *yatiri* and Phlura, who have difficulty in expanding their authority based on the knowledge of native medicine or by personality

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<sup>19</sup> This strategy is by no means unique to Phlura. See also Spedding (1989) for an account of women lobbying their views outside meetings. See also Allen (1988:119 *ff.*).

to wider contexts, the school teacher has no difficulty in being respected and heard by the whole community: his perceived fluency in Spanish and metropolitan culture compensates for his lack of the normal attributes of a respected person in the village. The school teacher often addresses and even chairs village meetings even though he owns no land and has only been in the village for a couple of years. His legitimization rests entirely on the fact that he is an outsider with much **mimuria** and a purveyor of Hispanic values *par excellence*.

The school teacher is considered to be the best source of **mimuria** in the village. It is believed by some that grandparents and other older people cannot give **mimuria** because they cannot read or write or even do arithmetic: The teacher is the one with **mimuria**. The school teacher is by far the most important source of external values in the village and the values he often purveys are directly opposed to basic Aymara precepts such as those surrounding **chachawarmi**.

In one lesson he instructed the children to copy a drawing of the family from the blackboard. It was a picture of a father, mother and their two children, one of each sex. The father was much larger than the mother (there is comparatively little sexual dimorphism in Pocabaya). He then told them to copy the following from the board: "The family is the basic social unit. The father is the one who works and provides for the family. The mother prepares the food and takes care of the children. The father is the maximal authority in the home." I afterwards asked some of the children who produces the food for the family (**achuña**) and who works in the fields. I was given a whole list of people including grandparents and the children themselves. I then asked who it was that decides when to sow or when to sell a cow. Some of the children, seeming a little unsure as if they were trying to guess what I wanted to hear, said the father. Most of the others, though replied with one word: **chachawarmi**.

It was the older children, perhaps because they understood the lesson better, who tended to answer what the teacher had taught them. It is important to note that the teacher was not simply explaining a possible variant to family structure and decision-making but presenting the nuclear family with the father at the head as the normative situation. Even at quite a young age children are aware of the power, wealth and superiority of the world outside and such a lesson can only cause conflict with their own experiences at home, more so when the teacher is a highly respected member of the community to whom all listen. With regards to the normal criteria for according respect in Pocabaya this is anomalous since, as a man with no wife, no children, no land, no

**cargos** (positions of authority or sponsorship of fiestas within the village) according to traditional values he is not even fully adult. His position of respect derives entirely from external values; in fact, he is quintessentially the purveyor of external values.

## Compadrazgo

Another area of Pocabaya life where social institutions are affected by the values of the dominant metropolitan society is **compadrazgo**, godparenthood. Similar to **chachawarmi**, **compadrazgo** relations are founded on fundamental ideas about power and how human beings are valued. It thus provides a useful comparison to the discussion on **chachawarmi** above.

**Compadrazgo** is the institution of 'fictive kinship' whereby through sponsorship of a child's baptism, **ritucha** (first hair cutting), or a couple's wedding, a wealthy or influential couple enter into a dyadic relationship with the family of the child they are sponsoring. A given individual will typically have a number of 'godparents'. S/he will have baptism, **ritucha** and wedding godparents as well as the godparents of his/her children. All of these people (some will double up) will be addressed with the title **pärinu** (godfather) or **märina** (godmother).

These are negotiated, exchange relationships, not simply ones where the couple attends to the spiritual or material well-being of the child. In a society where little is obtained or exchanged outside personal networks, these relationships have considerable importance. In Pocabaya, as in highland Bolivia in general, the relationship is not simply one of godfather/godchild but in fact includes the whole family of the godchild. In reality when one accepts the position of godfather to a child one is obligated to the whole family, including the parents of the child. Similarly, a godparent to a wedding has responsibility for the whole family including the offspring.

The parents address the godparents, not as **kumpäri** (Sp comadre - co-father) or **kumäri** (Sp. comadre - co- mother), but as **pärinu/märina** (Sp. padrino/ madrina - godfather/mother). The godparents, on the other hand, address the parents of their godchild as **kumpäri/kumäri**. It would appear that the godparents assert the egalitarian

nature of the relationship with the child's parents whereas the latter assert the hierarchical element.<sup>20</sup>

A couple will choose the most influential and wealthy people available to be godparents to their children. The greater the status and power of the **padrinos**, the more support they are likely to obtain, both financially and politically. It is a means of redistribution of resources, but an asymmetrical one (Crandon-Malamud 1991:87). This model is very much a Mediterranean one based on the paradigm of patron and client. The client vicariously shares in the prestige of his patron who, in turn gains prestige by having dependents. The former receives financial and political support and influence and gives material goods or occasional labour in return.

In the pre-Revolution period, Aymara Indians were closely limited by the law from gaining access to the centres of power. In this situation of limited access based on fundamentally racial criteria, Indians depended on their **comadrazgo** ties to work within the system. **Comadrazgo**, then can also function as a bridge between cultures and status groups (cf. Bastien 1978:101).

A true male **suma jaqi**, I was told, never refuses a request and is someone typically with many **ahijados** (Sp. godchildren): once again, a very Mediterranean model of personhood and power. Being a godfather requires above all financial resources since it is very difficult for a godfather to refuse a request from his **ahijados**. This model of patron-client relationship is quite different from all other models of personal relationships among the Aymara which stress complementarity and reciprocity, especially when the exchange of goods is concerned. The model of the powerful man who boosts his status through his many dependents to whom he stands in a paternal relationship is likewise dissonant with the generally egalitarian ethos of Pocabaya.

This relationship, known contemporarily as **comadrazgo** in the Andes, has been suggested by Huanca (1989) to be a transformation of the traditional **ichutata** relationship where the sponsor of the child was frequently a respected elder of the community such as the **yatiri**, seer, who could be assured to guide and take care of the spiritual well-being of the child.

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<sup>20</sup> There may be a tendency to revert to the more egalitarian model, but it is still the case that Pocabayenos would prefer as **compadres** powerful social superiors from without the community to social equals from within.

The term **ichutata** comes from the verb **ichuña**, to carry in one's arms, and **tata**, a respectful form of address: thus literally, the man who carries one in his arms. The term **ichutata/mama** is very rarely used in Pocabaya today and I only ever heard it used to stress the respect a godchild should give his/her godparent. "He is not only your **pärinu**, he is your **ichutata**", I overheard an older person tell a young man about to enter into such a relationship; she was trying to impress upon him the importance and correctness of such a relationship. "Nowadays it seems that these terms (**ichutata/mama**) have been transferred to **pärinu** [godfather] and **märina** [godmother] rich people, influential people within and without the community. It would not be odd then, that the social relations represented by the term would have almost exclusively economic connotations with people of high social prestige (Huanca 1989:51)." One can overdo the significance of the adoption of Spanish words into Aymara but the significance of this lexical shift is quite clear: there has been a parallel shift from the essentially Aymara institution of **ichuri** (the institution of **ichutata**) to the essentially Hispanic **compadrazgo**, although elements of the former clearly remain.

If Huanca's assertion that **ichuri** is a pre-Hispanic institution is correct, it would seem that the transformation from **ichuri** to **compadrazgo** started taking place in the first decades of the Colonial period. Curacas, Indian leaders who worked as mediators between the peasants and the Spanish authorities were often very corrupt. It was their job to collect taxes for the crown, a considerable proportion of which they kept for themselves. They had the resources and the power to adopt the role of **padrino** in the Hispanic mode. It appears it was the **curacas** who began **compadrazgo** relations with their followers. Through **compadrazgo**, they were able to consolidate and maintain their positions of power (Wachtel 1977:124).

Modern **compadrazgo** inherits much from the days of the hacienda when the **haciendado** or wealthy residents of Sorata would be almost bound to accept a request of godparenthood - and they generally had the resources to do so. The institution, essentially Hispanic in form, has survived the Agrarian Reform and revolution of 1952 somewhat reduced but nevertheless with the same ideas of what can be demanded. However, wealthy whites and mestizos, in so far as there are any left, are no longer able or willing to be **padrinos** and most Pocabayenos find their **compadres** from among their peers. It is thus a frequent complaint that **ahijados** (godchildren) are too demanding on one's financial resources despite the prestige that one has in being a **padrino**. The insertion of these Hispanic elements into an older system has changed the role to one

modelled on the **haciendado** bestowing patronage with whom one can never compete in resources and power.

The elements of the **ichuri** sponsoring system are still important. It is these that the godparents try to stress for they accord status without financial strain. The godparent has responsibility and authority over the whole family.<sup>21</sup> It is almost irrelevant whether one is godparent of the wedding, the first hair-cutting of the child (**ritucha**) or baptism.

Shortly after I became **padrino** to a child of the family with which I was living, the parents had a violent quarrel. I tried to stay out of it as much as possible thinking it none of my business and not understanding much Aymara at that point anyway. Later, however, I was criticised for not fulfilling my duty by being sufficiently authoritative with the parents. The role of the **padrino/madrina**, even if s/he is not the **padrino/madrina** or sponsor of the wedding, is to become involved in all marital disputes and the welfare of all the children, and not just the particular child. In fact, the god-parent is expected to oversee the general well-being of the whole family. The moral guidance of the family is of secondary significance but is still an important element.

Primitiva, bemoans the fact that she has no god-parents. Her birth god-parents are dead and since she did not get married in Pocabaya itself, she has no marriage **padrinos**. Her husband beats her regularly and by all accounts she is in the worst position of any woman in the village. Such marital violence is not common at all but when it does occur, the **padrinos** intervene. They may confront both parties, discuss the situation and make them apologise to each in front of witnesses. The man who has treated his wife unfairly and beaten her may be required to publicly state that he will not do so again. Primitiva has no one to turn to when she is ill-treated and beaten; nor does she have recourse to the resources of god-parents when she has no money or food to feed her children. Primitiva's children do not have **padrinos** because her husband has forbidden it on the grounds that Baptism is a Christian and not an Aymara ritual. The lot of someone in the position of having no **padrinos** can be quite serious indeed. I was told by several people in La Paz and Pocabaya that the reason there was so much family violence in the shanties of urban migrants in La Paz was because these young couples were not married and had no **padrinos**. Primitiva, since she did not marry in Pocabaya,

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<sup>21</sup> Albó & Mamani (1980:300) assert that what is known as **compadrazgo** is best referred to as **padrazgo**. **Compadrazgo** implies an egalitarian relationship between the parents whereas what in effect takes place is the ritual adoption of an entire family by a parent.

is not considered married at all. When discussing this with other Pocabayenos, it was often stated that even if the couple was married in Chulumani (a town in the *yungas*) as they insist they were, they did not get married in Pocabaya and there were no other Pocabayenos at the wedding: so how can they say they are married? The witness of at least some members of the community is an important factor in accepting a marriage. Marriage is an act taken before the community, and without the participation of the community, a marriage may not be considered to be totally valid.

The route to be considered **suma jaqi** is heavily influenced by the number of one's **ahijados** and one's fulfilment of the obligations towards them. We can see that, by the combination of indigenous and Hispanic elements, a contradiction arises in the relationship much in the same way as happens with **chachawarmi**. The modern godparent cannot compete with the **haciendado** of the past in either prestige or resources: thus, in the long run they will inevitably fail in fulfilling the Hispanic ideal of what the proper godparent should be. The combination of the two social relationships, at first glance quite sensible, results in an antinomy that cannot be resolved: the route to **suma jaqi** is frustrated.

For a woman to be considered **suma jaqi** is somewhat simpler. The means through which she must meet the ideological demands are much more accessible to her: whilst exposure to external values has changed the way people, be they men or women, are valued in the community, this is nonetheless much more so the case for men. We have already seen above how Hispanic elements have entered the system to alter the conception of **suma jaqi** for men by transforming the **ichutata** relationship and combining it with an Hispanic **compadrazgo** one.

As with gender relationships, Pocabayenos have access to at least two models of sponsorship/patronage. It is impossible to trace the historical development of **compadrazgo** and **ichuri** in Pocabaya or even to assert with certainty that one pre-dates the other. What is clearly the case is that there is an understanding in Pocabaya that **ichuri** is more traditional. Pocabayenos at times will assert the hierarchical aspects of **compadrazgo** when they need assistance from their **párinus** or when the latter are in need of labour from the former. By the same token, when actors seek to resist these demands, they are more likely to stress the egalitarian aspect of the relationship. As well as the hierarchy/equality axis, there is also the moral/economic axis. Actors can choose to stress the moral aspects of the **ichuri** relationship over the more economic **compadrazgo**. The result, as with **chachawarmi**, is that there is no single paradigm but,

rather, a set of possible interpretations which can be negotiated and renegotiated in different circumstances.

## Negotiating Precepts

...in the Andean world the cultural tradition is not one of competition in the Western mode, but one of reciprocity. In the West, there can only be one positive power, in this case that of men, and the women, to liberate themselves, try to do what men do in a system of competition, where there is always someone on top of someone else. In the Andean world, the division of tasks accords respect as much to the man as to the woman; the element of competition is in reciprocity, that is to say, to create greater harmony and well-being for the social group, be it the family, the community, etc..

(Michaux et al. 1989:29)

Underlying and supporting the basically egalitarian system of gender relations is not only the system of beliefs surrounding the notion of **chachawarmi** itself but the whole system of social relations, including **compadrazgo**. This is principally one based on the reciprocity and complementarity of exchange. It is, however, not only restricted to relation between people but between people and the supernatural (see Chapter 6).

When values contrary to these fundamental Aymara values enter the system, the resulting antinomy causes strain and tension in social relations; even when those ideas of complementarity are the most secure such as in **chachawarmi**. It is important to note, however, that despite the rhetoric that surrounds **chachawarmi** it is not, and perhaps never was, as egalitarian as is asserted by Pocabayenos themselves. Despite the fact that it always gives a woman a resource to assert herself against her husband should she need it, in practice, women work harder and have less public prestige than men.

The Andean organising principle of duality, as Sallnow (1987) has noted, is neither stable or necessarily egalitarian. There is always the possibility of turning a complementary egalitarian relationship into an hierachic one. This potential can be exploited or resisted and Pocabayenos are clearly in the process of doing both in a constant negotiation and renegotiation of positions, values and power.

It is this relatively small fissure in the structure, the fact that despite the complementarity of gender roles, the burden of domestic responsibilities to fulfil the traditional gender roles falls lighter on men than on women, which may have allowed the erosion of the greater structure of **chachawarmi**. This erosion, by shifting and

transforming gender roles, above all by putting a premium on the ability to speak Spanish and deal with the metropolitan culture is, in turn, weakening the structure of the institution of **chachawarmi**.

What must also be noted is the fact that although all married Pocabayenos stated their support and belief in an egalitarian and complementary marriage, it is not always the case that practice conforms to this model of gender relations. It is my thesis that the absence of men and their exposure to conflicting metropolitan values contribute greatly to this departure from the cultural precepts.

**Compadrazgo** is likewise exposed to the influences of the dominant culture. As circumstances change, Pocabayenos use the cultural tools they have to adapt to these changes and improve their position. The tendency to hierarchisation in **compadrazgo** relations can be seen as a way to gain access to otherwise inaccessible avenues of power.

With **compadrazgo** as with **chachawarmi**, Pocabayenos adapt and change to create new and more meaningful categories. In the clash of cultures, it is not the case that indigenous culture shatters at exposure to a more powerful Hispanic system: To a large extent the ideological challenge is met on indigenous terms using Andean categories and precepts which are adapted to address new and changing situations.

# Chapter V

## The Catholic Church and Pocobaya

The issues surrounding religion go to the very heart of the conflict between Aymara and national culture. Pocobayenos see the national religion, Roman Catholicism, as unsympathetic to local religion; yet there is an articulated link between local cult and state religion which shall be shown to be a model used in the Andes since before the Conquest. It is the retention of this model that has permitted Pocobayenos to keep their traditional beliefs without coming into full conflict with the state. Aymaras and Pocobayenos have negotiated their relationship with the state religion at least since Inca times and very possibly before.<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter the historical background of the relationship between Church and native communities will be discussed and we shall see that there is a strong historical continuity in the attitudes of both established Church and the local community in the articulation of the relationship between them. This will be placed in the context of the debate about whether or not a syncretic or dualistic model should be used to describe Aymara religion using the examples of two major Aymara feasts which are nominally Christian: All Saints and Carnival. These points will be illustrated with a different religious phenomenon, the fiesta surrounding the stone of San Pedro in a village very near Pocobaya.

I will show that the usual models for discussing Andean religion do not give a complete picture of the historical and political relationship between the Church and state and Indian communities such as Pocobaya.

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<sup>1</sup> See Platt (1987) for an account of the continuation of the models of relations between Aymaras and State on the political level.

## Catholicism and Pocabaya

An important part of the Pocabayeno worldview is the relationship Pocabayenos have with the Catholic Church. Catholicism has been preached in the Andes for almost five hundred years and there is no doubt that this has had a great influence on the religious behaviour of Aymaras; yet it may be that the influence of the Church is not as profound as has been supposed (*cf.* van den Berg 1989; Monast 1966) and, consequently, Catholicism is not as deeply rooted as one might suspect after five centuries of Catholic presence in Bolivia.

Pocabayenos, and indeed most Aymaras I came across, saw little or no incompatibility between their autochthonous beliefs in the *achachilas* and *Pachamama* and an adherence to Catholicism. This is partly due to the fact that official Catholicism has a clearly-defined sphere of relevance which is frequently conceptualised as being quite separate from the autochthonous sphere (*cf.* Harvey 1987; Bastien 1978), and partly because, for the most part, little practical importance is accorded to the Christian sphere in day-to-day religion. Consequently, an admission to being Catholic in no way precludes an acceptance of non-Catholic religious practices.

The case of evangelical Protestantism is quite the reverse, for Protestantism is seen as much more clearly antagonistic and opposed to indigenous beliefs and practices. With the expansion of Protestantism in Bolivia, the distinction between Catholicism, which tolerates or turns a blind eye to a large amount of heterodox beliefs and practices, and Protestantism which rejects all heterodoxy, has become particularly pertinent. This contrast, in turn, has served to obscure the differences between orthodox Catholicism and that practised by Aymaras such as those of Pocabaya. The significance of statements of allegiance to the Church can not be taken at face value, for they can also be a statement about local beliefs and practices.

### The Question of Syncretism

The reason for this accommodating relationship between the Catholic Church and practitioners of Andean religions is to be found in the historical relationship between the Catholic Church and the Indians of the Andes. There are some very strong continuities, especially since the Extirpation of Idolatry, which, coupled with the lack of priests, have

allowed communities such as Pocabaya to retain much of their indigenous belief system without too much hostility and control from the Church or the State. The attitude of the Church in the Seventeenth Century towards Andean religion will be seen to be fundamentally similar to that of today as embodied in the views and attitudes of local priests.

Aymara religion has been in contact with, and been affected by, Christianity for five hundred years and it is beyond dispute that this has effected a considerable change in the form of Andean religious expression. It is widely believed that the resulting syncretism is a body of confused and contradictory beliefs which are fundamentally pagan. Some writers see a total synthesis in belief:

Paganism and Christianity have been mixed to such an extent that we can speak of a special religion in which there have been combined elements of two different civilizations.

(Metraux 1940:54)<sup>2</sup>

Others see Aymara religion as being composed of two competing systems of belief:

The indigenous religion and Catholicism are generally practised by the same people. Both have been partially syncretised, even though for the great part, they remain distinct.

(Lewellen 1977:104-5)<sup>3</sup>

and

...elements that used to be considered syncretism (or the fusion of two religions into a third), now begin to appear as a dual religious system, in which Christianity and native religious practices can operate simultaneously without the necessity to mix or confuse.

(McGourn 1977:37)

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<sup>2</sup> See also Abercrombie (1987) for a similar view of a fusion of beliefs resulting in the creation of a new and distinct religion. A similar interpretation also underlies van den Berg's book on Aymara religion, La Tierra no da así nomás, (1989).

<sup>3</sup> See also Harvey (1987).

Schreiter also says that

...among the Aymaras of Peru and Bolivia Christianity and the old native religion are practised side by side. The people participate in the rites of both systems and have no difficulty in doing so."

(Schreiter 1984:179)

The question as to why Andean people have 'no difficulty' in participating in the rites of both systems bears some examination.

The term 'syncretism', as van den Berg argues (1989:260-1), is at best confusing if not redundant because, in the first place, all religions are syncretic (i.e., they combine elements of other religions) and secondly, the term in any case covers two possible meanings: juxtaposition and synthesis. It is quite clear that Aymaras use the symbols and rhetoric of the Christian religion in some contexts and autochthonous ones in others. In many cases, both autochthonous and Christian symbols, rites, or expression are combined.

The argument about syncretism has tended to revolve around questions of form rather than content: rhetoric and symbols rather than the intention of the described practices. The debate has tended to obscure the fact that much religious practice reflects a political reality and assumes that belief and politics are neatly divorced from each other. Moreover, the tendency is to observe Andean religion from a European perspective and this naturally throws into relief superficial similarities in symbolism or formal practice. Above all, Andean religion should be considered from the perspective of what people say they are doing and to what end: We shall see that statements regarding adherence to beliefs should not so readily be taken at face value as Andean people may very well be articulating the acceptance of an historical or political fact, rather than a simple religious one (see also following chapter).

All Pocabayenos would say that they are Catholics and, according to the local priest they are: they baptise their children, they believe in God and the saints. Over the years there has come to be something of a truce between the Catholic clergy and the Andean peoples, with the acceptance among the former that the latter are not easily going to become Catholic in the European mould. Since Vatican II the accommodation has reached the point where priests use ponchos as surplices and *awayus*, woven carrying cloths, as stoles and address many of the people's needs such as blessing fields and crops.

The priest in Sorata is of the opinion that it is virtually impossible to separate the pagan from the Christian in local belief. Whilst recognising the pagan element in their worship of saints and the Virgin, for example, he believes that an attempt to correct these 'mistakes' would only confuse local Indians and thus the best thing to do is to serve them as best as possible and in time, as they develop, these ancient practices will eventually fall away.

The priest's views are an almost perfect echo of those of Monast, the French Catholic missionary whose books have had a great influence on the clerical perspective on Aymara religion. For Monast, the Aymaras are in a sort of Old Testament stage and one must wait patiently until they grow into a more mature faith:

The Indian must develop according to the same process (as the Hebrews): a progressive maturation of his thought should lead him to break [with his non-Christian past], as the adult abandons the clothing of the child. Becoming an adult in faith, he will see everything clearly and will simply let fall the false values that belong to his old concept of service to the divinity. And so the ch'alla, the wilanchas and recourse to the witch doctor will disappear by themselves, as milk teeth fall out when one is eight years of age.

(Monast 1972:346)

This view of Andean religion is by no means a modern phenomenon and goes back to the early years of colonialism in the Americas. Its roots are in Augustinian theology which was adapted to the particular theological problems facing the Spanish in the New World by Bartolomé de las Casas in the Sixteenth Century. Las Casas argued that Andean religion was akin to classical religion in that it prepared its adherents for Christianity (as did Augustine for Classical Paganism), and that Andean idolatry was thus 'natural'; that is, it was a natural, if erroneous, expression of religious faith. Las Casas saw various analogues between the Inca religion and Christianity, most important of which was their apparent monotheism. The Incas chose to worship "at least the most excellent of God's creatures", the sun, and were thus most well prepared for evangelisation as Hebraic monotheism and Greek philosophy prepared the Ancients for Christianity (in Duviviers 1971:25).

Las Casas' humanistic theological position was by no means shared by all in the Hispanic world in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries and was actively opposed by others, notably Arriaga. This view did, however, have an influence and finally prevailed at the end of

the Extirpation of Idolatry in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. His effect on Christian missionisation is that proselytisers were keen to see and even seek analogues of Christian beings in the pagan pantheon. The **Pachamama** was seen as an indigenous version of the Virgin, the sun an analogue of God, the worship of the dead encompassed by All Saints. On one level then, Andean religion was simply dressed in new clothes. These new clothes have ironically served to disguise Aymara religion from clerics and has created confusion among them, and certainly on the part of the local priests in Sorata, as to which practice is Catholic and which pagan.

This is the background to Monast's rather naïve view of Andean religion founded, on the belief that there is an antinomy between the old and the Christian and that the Christian will, through evolution, supersede paganism. It is premised on a belief that Andean religion is not coherent and that it is fundamentally false. As I will show below, the religious beliefs of the Pocabayenos are coherent, even though they contain both pagan and Christian elements. Moreover, it is not a question, as is commonly supposed, that Christian deities are in competition with pagan ones or even that each occupies its own position in a system of beliefs but, more accurately, that the Christian beings, although accepted as existing, are generally considered to have little or no relevance to daily life. What is however the case is a situation similar to that which prevailed during the time of the Incas: the state cult is accepted as being an historical and political fact whilst the local cult continues to address the immediate needs of the people.

There can be no doubt that all Pocabayenos believe in the existence of God. God is regularly invoked in all prayers to the **Pachamama** and **achachilas**: all prayers start with **Tius Awki**, **Tius Yuqa**, **Tius Ispiritu Santu** (God the father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit); yet he is quintessentially a *Deus otiosus* (Harris and Bouysse-Cassagne 1987) rarely concerning himself with the affairs of the world except by occasionally punishing the people below. Armandu, a Pocabayeno, told me that God the Father and Jesus are just two different names for the same thing. All God does is sit in the **Alaxpacha**, the heavens, and watch; he does not actually do anything. Two women who overheard us agreed with each other that God punishes. I asked them why God punishes and they replied that he just does (*cf.* Finch 1979, Ochoa 1975d; van den Berg 1990:183-186 and below).

There is a general consensus among Pocabayenos that God lives in the space above, the **Alaxpacha**. Although **Alaxpacha** is commonly translated as 'heaven', a convenient shorthand for missionaries, it is in fact something quite different. **Alaxpacha**

is the space above presided over by the Sun. Pocabayenos had no conception of Paradise, angels and other elements traditionally believed to exist in heaven according to Catholic belief. The Virgin, on the other hand, was considered to live in the **Manqhapacha**, the abode of the tellurian spirits, in the space below. Some people however, said that the Virgin lived in a church.

One particularly perspicacious Pocabayeno, Jinaru, explained the situation to me thus:

Before [the Spaniards came] there was no Virgin; there was only the **Pachamama**. They told us that the Virgin was the **Pachamama** but the Virgin is not really as powerful as the **Pachamama**. The Virgin of Pocabaya is not even a real Virgin; she was brought here by the hacendado. She is not like the Virgin of Copacabana; she has no power.

A 'real' Virgin, like the Virgin of Copacabana, is one with powers of fertility; that is, with powers of the **Pachamama**. The **Pachamama** is much more powerful than the Virgin (*juk'amp ch'amaniwa*). The Virgin of Copacabana is legitimate because she has the kinds of tellurian powers associated with the **Pachamama**.<sup>4</sup> What Jinaru was trying to say was that the powerful Virgins, those with important cults around them, are really cults to the **Pachamama** and are representatives of the Virgin in name only. He was also very aware that the Christian religion was imposed upon his people and that the hacendado tried to pull a fast one by giving the village a Virgin. Genuine cults, in his mind, are those that rise from a particular spot with special powers of chthonic origin: these Virgins constitute incarnations, or even simply representations, of the **Pachamama**.

The case of the *Virgen de Copacabana* is particularly illustrative of how a quintessentially Christian being has been coöpted by the Indians and conforms to the model for a variety of Christian cults. The *Virgen de Copacabana* is not much more than a convenient and safe symbol for Aymara traditional ritual practice (see below).

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<sup>4</sup> An example of the Virgin identified as the **Pachamama** was given to me by an acquaintance from southern Bolivia: An Indian came to see the priest to ask him to say a mass for the Virgin. "Very good" said the priest, "Now for which Virgin would you like me to say mass?" The man looked puzzled and the priest tried to help him out. "Well, would you like me to say a mass for the Virgin of Copacabana, the Virgin of Urkupiña..." and listed a number of popular Virgin cults in Bolivia. The Indian looked more puzzled than before. He shook his head, "No, no" he said, "The Virgin, the Virgin" and he stooped down to scoop up some earth to show the priest for which Virgin he wanted the mass said.

The Virgin which is the patron saint of Pocabaya is widely considered to be false by Pocabayenos, that is, of having no power. One of the most common arguments is that the **hacienda** brought it to the village and it did not appear out of the ground or in rock as such icons are apparently supposed to do.<sup>5</sup> As an icon of the village, its welfare is linked to the welfare of the village: were it to be destroyed catastrophe would fall upon the village. It was indeed destroyed, in the battle with the neighbouring village, Thana. Tiudusyu recounts the event:

That saint (Virgin) is not a true one. It is made of wood. They came from up there. With much shouting and they came out of the church. They took everything out of the church and threw everything against the rocks. Then they put everything into the caves where the skunks live. The arms were made of nothing but wood and put together with wire. This saint was thrown all broken into the river. Nothing at all happened. If it were truly sacred, something would have happened to the village. Nothing at all happened.

Janiw santukatañati. Lawikataynaw. Aka pataxan misturaxawa. Uka mistusaw ch'axwana inkliati apsuwasin q'al tunjapxataña añathuy putunaka aka jichhaxa phipullanaka uskutaxataña.  
Ukax ukham lawata aka amparanaka akanaka alamprimp luratakitaynaw. Akanaka muyurinaka akham. Ukax aka jawiran jaqusxatana, suntu q'ala t'unxata. Ukhama janirakiw kunas paskarakitixay muñañispan kunay aka istansar paschispa. Janiw kunas paskiti.

The reason nothing happened is because the Virgin was not made of rock as any representation of tellurian power, such as the stone in San Pedro and the hill in Copacabana, should be. A genuine icon represents a tutelary spirit: not a Christian tutelary spirit but a chthonic one. It is very common for other villages to have a **calvario**, a mound or rock where one can perform the stations of the cross. The **calvario** is modelled on the **calvario** that has been made of the hill in Copacabana. A **calvario** is used for offerings to the **achachilas** and sometimes has a cross on it. The word **calvario** has no Christian connotations for those villagers I asked who stated it was for the **achachilas**.

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<sup>5</sup> See the rock of San Pedro below

There appears to be some confusion in Pocabaya as to what saints really are, but people who did give me an answer considered that they lived in the churches. The dead, however, were not thought to live in the **Alaxpacha**, a place or state no one seemed able to describe to me, but rather, in the mountains, in the **Manqhapacha**. The lack of importance that the **Alaxpacha** plays in the life of Pocabayenos is illustrated by their vague and often contradictory descriptions they gave. This is in sharp contrast to the detail I was readily given about the **Manqhapacha**, the space below, where the autochthonous spirits reside. Several Pocabayenos were, however, aware that the Church taught that one's souls went to heaven but this was recounted as specifically the teaching of the Church rather than a personally held belief. In this Pocabayenos are similar to the people of Kaata studied by Bastien where "despite a token appreciation of heaven and its glory, they do not see heaven as desirable goal" (Bastien 1978:96).

Another Pocabayeno, Ustakyu, described God to me as follows: "God the Father (**Tius Awki**), lives in the **Alaxpacha**. He is the sun and is powerful. When praying to him one must kneel and pray to the sun...The saints just live in the churches; also the Virgin." Pocabaya, he said, also had a Virgin, "but it is small and not powerful." The association of God with the sun was encouraged by some missionaries such as Las Casas, as we have seen. It is not difficult to imagine a situation in which the Inca sun cult was seen by Aymaras as being replaced quite simply by another sun cult, a Christian sun cult.

For the Aymaras a concept such as the Holy Trinity is illogical and difficult to grasp, partly, no doubt, because it is very difficult to explain, as was discovered by the missionaries in the Colonial period (see van den Berg 1990:237-8;). The local priest confided to me that Aymaras lacked the sophistication for such theological subtleties but it is more the case that little attempt has been made to explain such dogma to the Aymaras. Moreover, the priests' lack of knowledge of Aymara meant that they did not even begin to explain such theological complexities properly. "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost" has been rendered into Aymara as "God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit is his name"<sup>6</sup> which implies that there are three names for the same Godhead rather than a Trinity.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Tius Awki, Tius Yuqa, Tius Ispiritu Santu sutipa.

<sup>7</sup> There is however some evidence that there may have been an indigenous trinitarian deity as suggested by the three-headed statue of the Aymara god Tangatanga (Gisbert 1982:88,89). Little is known of this god, however, and its cult does not appear to have been very widespread.

The Church is sometimes seen as actively hostile to the interests of the Aymaras as Irkulyanu notes:

The Church makes a division within the people. It is an institution of the wealthy and the big landowners... The Church is not appropriate for an Aymara. [If an Aymara enters] the Church [as a] deacon, he must think only of the Church and no longer in his own language.

...The Church has two thoughts: it wants the Aymara and it does not want the Aymara. For a baptism [the parents] have to follow a course. If we do not attend the course, they will not baptise the child. If a person wants to marry, s/he must spend a week on a course for marriage. These courses are against [the ways] of the Aymara.

Irkulyanu is clearly convinced that these courses contradict many of the beliefs that Aymaras have about the **achachilas** and the **Pachamama** and he holds these beliefs to be important to an Aymara identity and life. Irkulyanu forcefully and eloquently expresses the fundamental antinomy between the values of the Church and those of the Aymara. The curious phrasing, "...he must think only of the Church and no longer in his own language," illustrates how closely identified language and culture are for some Aymara: to think in the way of the Church is to lose the ability not only to follow the ways and language of the Aymara but even to think like an Aymara.<sup>8</sup> For all this, Irkulyanu still sees baptism and Christian marriage as desirable if only they did not involve the Church and the indoctrination courses the priests oblige those seeking the sacraments to take.

## The Local Priest

A priest visited Pocabaya only once in the two and a half years of my association with the village. The following account illustrates the superficiality of the contact between the ministers of the Church and Pocabaya. This superficiality leaves much room for people to come to their own conclusions about the Church and its relation to the village of Pocabaya with little chance of being contradicted.

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<sup>8</sup> The importance of language as definitive of humanity for Aymaras has been noted in the previous chapter. The association of Aymara with the autochthonous spirits and Spanish with the Christian world is also particularly strong and is drawn out more fully in the following chapter.

Father Dionisio arrived on the day announced although somewhat late as he had not quite realised how arduous his journey would be. He was greeted by the **Secretario General** and escorted directly to the school. Pocabaya does have a consecrated church (although the priest did not know this) which was used in the time of the hacienda thirty years ago. Nowadays, it is only used on the village feast day when the Virgin is placed inside for the duration of the fiesta. The church is too small for the whole village so the larger and better lit school is used instead.

The priest warmly greeted all the Pocabayenos and congratulated them on being such good Christians. I had the opportunity to ask him what he meant by this and he replied that, unlike many other villages in the region, most couples in Pocabaya married sooner or later and also baptised their children. Unfortunately, he said, a disturbingly large number of the Indians are not marrying at all any more; Pocabayenos were much more conscientious.

He had seventeen baptisms to perform and four weddings. He spent a lot of time sorting out the paperwork. For the baptisms to be legal, the parents had to purchase a form in Sorata which the priest would validate so the child could be legally registered as being baptised. He also checked the parents' marriage certificates. Some parents did not have marriage certificates and were told that the baptism would be invalidated if they could not prove that they were married in the Church. Regrettably, he said, that was the law of the Church. This is, in fact, patently false. The Catholic Church requires no such certification on the part of the parents and it would seem that the priest was insisting on this because parents are much more likely to want to baptise their children than to get married. It is very common in Pocabaya for parents to marry after their third or fourth child is born and, in some cases, never get married at all. Baptism is seen as essential in giving the child status and legitimisation in the eyes of the wider society in the world beyond Pocabaya, that is, the world of the **cristianos** (Christians), as the **ritucha**, the first hair-cutting, is in giving the child legitimisation within the community. A baptismal certificate is also necessary for the acquisition of a Bolivian identity card. The priest would appear to be capitalising on this fact to strengthen the Church's position in other areas of life, namely marriage.

Once all the paperwork was settled one way or another, Father Dionisio began mass. He spoke not a word of Aymara so the service was conducted in Spanish apart from the readings from the Bible which were read out in Aymara by members of the community. He began the service by telling the congregation what good Christians they

were even if they did live so far away. The implication was quite clear: it is not that the priest lives far away from his congregation but the other way around and, moreover, there is the implication that good Christians were the ones who lived in Sorata and not up treacherous mountain paths.

The priest offered the mass to God in thanks for the rain so we may have even more and to the Virgin that she may protect the fields, the crops and the animals. He could have just as easily have substituted the **achachilas** for God and the **Pachamama** for the Virgin. According to the beliefs of Pocabayenos, it is the **achachilas** who are responsible for rain and the **Pachamama** who is responsible for the fields, the crops and the animals. Furthermore, the terms **Pachamama** and 'Virgin' are widely considered to be interchangeable and it may well be that the priest was trying to encourage a similar association with the **achachilas** and God. In subsequent conversations he made it quite clear to me that he was aware of the existence of the tellurian beings in the minds of the Aymara and their relative associations and was even actively encouraging an association between pagan and Christian beliefs. It is no coincidence that directly behind the altar in the church in Sorata there is a painting of Mount Illampu. Mountains are not a common element in Christian iconography but Illampu does happen to be the most important **achachila** in the area.

His sermon was short, largely I suspect because the majority of the people there did not understand Spanish. He congratulated them yet again for being such good Christians, for giving up a whole day to God. It appears that attendance at mass is not as encouraging in other nearby communities where people continue working in the fields.

After mass he proceeded with the weddings. He asked each of the couples if they were absolutely sure about the marriage and then blessed the rings. Each groom placed a ring on the hand of his bride and vice versa. The priest spoke the standard words of betrothal in Spanish which were repeated by each in turn.

Then the grooms placed their hand over the hands of their respective brides and the priest placed a coin in the hand and told them to repeat after him: "Receive these coins which represent all the goods we shall share". He then placed a gold chain around each couple and announced "What God has joined, may no man put asunder." Each couple was declared married in turn in this manner.

He then proceeded to the baptisms which were also done together. The declaration of faith by the parents and godparents was a notably half-hearted affair. This was particularly the case when they were asked to reject Satan. Most just mumbled and a

drunk at the back shouted out that he did not reject Satan which produced a few laughs. The priest was greatly annoyed and repeated the question, this time insisting on a more vigorous response.

The children were baptised with water and chrism, an act which was not without confusion as the parents and godparents were required to stand together in a very small place. Several people were godparents to one child and parents of another. One couple were involved in four christenings which caused the priest some confusion and then mirth as the same faces popped up again and again.

With all the children baptised and beginning to calm down Father Dionisio blessed the *inkuñas*, woven cloths, with maize that had been laid in front of the altar. These will be kept in the hope of a good harvest. The service ended without much ceremony and everyone filed out to celebrate in their respective households. The **Secretario General** led the priest to his house where he was given some refreshment and then, shortly after, escorted to the path that leads down the valley.

The lack of ceremony with which the priest was received into the community is quite at variance with the normal custom for receiving guests into the village such as school teachers, returned soldiers, and other visitors such as the American woman from La Paz who contracts Pocabayenos to make cloth dolls for her. Such guests are seated at table under an arch of cane stalks decorated with colourful *awayus*, carrying cloths. Visitors during the village fiesta in September are similarly received in a large *kawiltu* (*cf. Sp. cabildo*), a temporary structure built of cane and decorated with *awayus*. I expressed surprise to several people at the lack of a ceremony for receiving the priest but was simply told that it was not the custom to receive the priest in any other way.

I met with Father Dionisio later in Sorata. He explained to me that he and one other priest had to minister not only to Sorata but 230 other communities. He says he tries to visit all the communities but they are many and remote; several are more difficult to get to than Pocabaya, and he simply does not have the resources. For a reason I was unable to ascertain, there is a very high turnover of priests in Sorata<sup>9</sup> which means that more often than not a given priest only ever visits a community once before being transferred.

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<sup>9</sup> There is a persistent rumour that Father Dionisio's predecessors were transferred because they were becoming too wealthy through dealing in gold.

Father Dionisio's position on paganism is that one must respect the native culture: many of the rites the Aymaras practice invoke saints, the Virgin and so on and this is good and should by no means be disengaged. Despite their syncretic nature, they should not be extirpated because, in time, the pagan elements will fall away leaving the pure Christian elements behind. It was a mistake, he said, to reject these beliefs altogether, as some foreign priests and Protestants do, because this just drives these practices underground. The Christian elements in their beliefs must be encouraged and nurtured and they will thus prevail. If one is too outspoken against pagan practices the Indians will quite simply reject the priest and the Church. This happened, he told me, to a colleague of his on the *altiplano* who angered a community so much that they dispensed with the priest altogether and replaced him with a tape recording of the mass.

I pointed out that in his visit to Pocabaya he seemed to actively encourage associations between God and the Virgin and the *achachilas* and the **Pachamama** respectively. He agreed that this is what must be done as once the pagan and the Christian elements are fused in the minds of the Aymaras, the pagan associations will eventually whither away. Father Dionisio must be seen in the historical context of the missionisation of South America. His views of how the faith should be spread and how paganism should be dealt with are coherent with the Church's position over the last four hundred years.

What has changed in the recent history of Pocabaya is that since the Agrarian Reform was implemented in the 1950s, there is no **haciendado** to encourage Christian practices and to provide a priest for the fiestas. It is not surprising that Father Dionisio considers the lack of priests to be the major problem facing the Catholic Church today since not only is contact with the mass of Indians in the area extremely minimal, but they are left open to evangelical Protestantism. Protestant groups in this century have offered education to the Indians at a time when the Catholic Church actively opposed it, as well as provided a structure which allows for local people to be trained and to serve as ministers.

## The Church and Aymara Religion

The Catholic Church's attitude to indigenous religion has undergone an important shift since the violent and ruthless Extirpation of Idolatry of the early Sixteenth Century. This followed a relatively benign period of proselytisation with publicised successes of the extraordinary numbers of people baptised at a time. The **caciques**<sup>10</sup> readily adopted Christianity as a means of consolidating their position of power but the mass of the population only adopted the faith in the most superficial and public of forms. The priest often served the **encomendero**<sup>11</sup> as a **mayordomo** (estate manager) and it is easy to see how his mission did not have the expected success: he was corrupt and avaricious in the eyes of the Indians, but he was unable to convince them of the true God and Creator of the world, or of the mystery of Redemption and priests did not give a good example of a Christian and sacramental life, as explains Quiroga (1563:122, referred to in van Kessel 1989:31).

Another important aspect of the reception of Christianity in the New World is the fact that at the time of the Conquest Spain had just completed a 'Reconquest' of Iberia in a series of wars which became saturated with religious significance however they may have started. Religion and the politics of conquest had become inextricably linked in Spain by the time the Spanish arrived in the Andes. According to Sallnow, the concomitant subordination of religion to politics ensured that 'Catholicism in the Andes was to become first and foremost a mechanism of political and social control and only secondarily an ethical and spiritual teaching' (1987:50).

Not that much has changed in the Andes, at least, as perceived by the Indians. Priests are still at best mistrusted and at worst seen as agents of exploitation and cultural oppression. The number of stories and jokes about priestly philandering and hypocrisy shows that Catholic priests are still better known for the commission rather than the remission of sins.

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<sup>10</sup> Caciques were members of the indigenous aristocracy who were set up as intermediaries between the Indians and the Crown. They were notoriously corrupt and frequently amassed great wealth.

<sup>11</sup> An **encomendero** was someone who received a labour grant, an **encomienda**, from the crown. The **encomienda** included rights to the labour of the Indians who lived on the **encomienda** and who often had originally owned the land as well as the produce of the land. The **encomienda** system was the forerunner of the **hacienda** system.

The Third Council of Lima (1582-1583) which met under the auspices of the Viceroy Toledo's administration, sought to address this situation by attending more conscientiously to the proselytisation of the Indians as well as the destruction of idols and the active repression of practitioners of native religion.

Despite these efforts, however, Francisco de Avila, parish priest of Huarochirí, discovered that his parishioners, all confessing Christians, were duplicitously practising their pagan beliefs thanks to a clandestine network of 'sorcerers and witches'. In 1608, with the aid of the Bishop of Lima and the Jesuits, he instigated the 'Extirpation of Idolatry'.

The bloody fervour of the three campaigns in the first half of the seventeenth century is well documented (*cf.* Duviols 1971; Wachtel 1977). The immediate result, however, was to push indigenous practices underground rather than eradicate them. The Indians publicly assumed the major elements of Christianity as well as the rhetoric of the Christian faith and were thus able to resist the imposition of Christianity (*cf.* van Kessel 1980:206).

The strategy was not so different from that used by Aymaras under the Incas. Whilst accepting the imposition of the major sun cult, they continued with their own beliefs<sup>12</sup>: the important difference being, however, that whereas the Incas accepted indigenous beliefs so long as they did not conflict with the state cult, the Spaniards tried to eradicate them totally. When local cults conflicted with the state cult, the Incas tried to destroy or coöpt them.<sup>13</sup> The destruction of the Inca state religion did not mean an end to Andean religion as a whole but a reversion to local religion which had pre-existed and continued to exist throughout the Inca period. "Unlike Christian Spaniards, Andeans did not require that every theological detail be consistently translated into ritual. This is why regional and Andean cults could be performed side by side" (MacCormack

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. Wachtel (1977); Duviols (1971); see also MacCormack's account of the local cult of Pachacamac (1991:98).

<sup>13</sup> Harris has argued that the religious beliefs of the Laymi of southern highland Bolivia suggest the recognition that the advent of the Incas and the imposition of their state religion was comparable to that of the Spaniards. "...Laymi religion suggests... that... the imposition of the Inka state religion with compulsory worship of the sun-god Inti may itself have produced a comparable rupture in indigenous cosmology. Inti is today the highest deity worshipped by the Laymis, identified both with the sun itself, known as 'our father', with the host in the Catholic mass, and with the Monstrance used in benediction" (Harris 1982:84).

1991:257). Moreover, Andeans were aware that the Sun cult was an imposed state cult and that, for the Incas, political power and religious representation were indivisible.

Under the Incas, Andean peoples became accustomed to a certain hostility on the part of the state against local cults and even became used to the destruction of idols. They also learned how to conceal their local cults from the Incas (MacCormack 1991), something they would continue to do with the advent of the Spanish. Duvíols suggests further that in between the collapse of the Inca state and the advent of the Extirpation period there was a renaissance of local cults: "In the vast areas poorly controlled by the Europeans, the ancient regional cults, freed from the tutelage of the Incas, revived, continued, but also developed" (Duvíols 1971:346).

For all the violence of the Extirpation of Idolatry (cf. Duvíols 1971:187-211) it was ultimately ineffective largely, asserts Duvíols, because of the laziness and general disinclination of most clerics to engage in violent confrontations with their parishioners (*ibid*:147). As Duvíols notes (1971:170), from the very beginning, enthusiasm for the Extirpation met with resistance: "a great number [of priests] had established with their faithful a *modus vivendi* on which they found their peace and their profit in closing their eyes".

Not only did the Extirpation suffer from the disinclination of many of the clergy, but it served to push indigenous religious practices underground. The Indians learned to be more secretive about their practices and adopted the rhetoric of the Spanish when describing their own beliefs and practices. According to van Kessel (1989:34), "The tenacity of the Indians, their capacity to assimilate and absorb, the genius and creativity with which they invented forms of continuity and survival for their cult, seems to have obliged the priests to recognise this reality". The resistance to the Extirpation spread further as various clerics feared being accused of negligence and incompetence by the various investigators of the Extirpation.

By 1661 with the publication of Peña Montenegro's manual for parish priests, the Extirpation of Idolatry ended. What had been described as 'heresy' became defined as mere superstition and the term 'Indian customs' was introduced to describe Aymara religion (*ibid*.). In effect, by the later decades of the seventeenth century, the argument of Bartolomé de las Casas had finally won the day. The result was a distinction between the sacred and profane which allowed space for the practice of Andean religion. In this the Catholic Church is in striking contrast to Protestant cults for whom this distinction

does not hold and therefore work actively against the eradication of any practice that Catholics would call 'harmless superstition'.

This attitude has persisted to modern times. The parish priest of Sorata is convinced of the basic Catholicism of the Indians. For him, the fact that they have church marriages and baptisms is clear evidence of their sincerity. He said, "Oh yes, they are a little confused at times and mix Christian beliefs with those of the **Pachamama** and **achachilas** but essentially the beliefs are Christian. It is very difficult for us to tell them to stop their practices because they so often involve a saint such as Saint Andrew or the Virgin. How can we tell them to stop? It would be like telling them to stop worshipping the Virgin...In time, these old customs will disappear by themselves...We just have to continue to reinforce the orthodox beliefs".

The legacy of the Extirpation of Idolatry is that Indians have adopted a Christian rhetoric for many of their practices which the priest can take at face value and be assured that the Indians are indeed Christian. This has been noted from the very first years of the Conquest. Whereas the earlier missionaries and Conquistadores attempted to erase the state religious festival of Inti Raymi by replacing it with Corpus Christi which occurs at approximately the same time of the year, the authorities simply allowed the Indians to continue their celebrations under the guise of a Christian feast. An observer in the early sixteenth century noted,

The Indians nowadays, while appearing to celebrate our festival of Corpus Christi, in effect indulge in much superstition by celebrating their old festival of Inti Raymi.

(Polo de Ondegardo in MacCormack 1992:180)

The fiesta of San Pedro which takes place in an eponymous village very near Pocobaya is a good example of the continuity of this process today.

## Local Religion and Christian Symbolism

### The Fiesta of San Pedro

In the nearby village of San Pedro is a chapel with a figure in stone. This stone, depicting alternatively St Peter or Jesus Christ (depending on whom one asks), was found near the river and brought up to the village. The next day the stone mysteriously disappeared and was found again on a small plateau nearer the river. Once again, the villagers brought it up to the village only to have the same thing occur the following night. They then decided to build the church around the stone and away from the village where it stands to this day. This figure is said to have rid the valley of snakes and thus made it inhabitable.<sup>14</sup>

The fiesta of San Pedro is not held on the feast day of the eponymous saint (June 29) but on the Thursday after Easter - a very rare case of a movable feast for a village fiesta. The fiesta attracts miners from the gold mines far to the east. On the eve of the fiesta they make their way with torches along the treacherous path that follows the river from Sorata to make offerings to the stone.<sup>15</sup> They become drunk, of course, as happens in every fiesta, and pour libations. They also offer coca and even gold dust as well as make a sacrifice by fire of a llama foetus (*sullu*). The following day the priest comes from Sorata to say mass and the stone is paraded by the sponsors (always miners). Meanwhile there is much dancing: *morenadas* depicting negro slaves in the mines as well as the parrot dance with feathers from jungle birds.

The people who attend the fiesta say that the rock is particularly powerful in protecting miners and giving them luck. Although not *Supay*, the kind of denizen of the underworld typically associated with mines, it was described as something similar and definitely of the *Manqhapacha*, the underworld. One old resident told me that the fiesta

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<sup>14</sup> The elements of this myth are common to other parts of the Andes. Isbell (1978:65) recounts a similar myth of a statue appearing in a place, placed in a church, and then reappearing at the site in which it was first found until a chapel was built. Sallnow (1987:70) notes that the association with water, in this case a river, is characteristic of many of these shrines.

<sup>15</sup> There is also a road from Sorata to San Pedro which is longer than the footpath but which is usually suitable for a four-wheel drive car for most of the year. The priest arrives by car.

was a fiesta to the **Tiu**, the tutelary spirit of the mine, and that is why all the miners came. The priest seemed to believe that he was celebrating Easter with the people four days late "as is the custom here." No one else seemed to think they were celebrating Easter. In fact, when I asked if this was an Easter celebration my question was greeted with laughter. Did I not know that Easter was four days ago?

At its most superficial, the fiesta is a Christian feast and the priest even manages to convince himself that it is an Easter celebration. It is in the interest neither of the Aymaras nor the priest for the latter to be enlightened. The priest's attendance adds greater importance and legitimacy to the fiesta and the consecration of the stone. For the priest to abandon the fiesta would further alienate the peasants from the Church by reducing even more the contact they have with it and so it is convenient for him to believe, as did so many priests when the fervour of the Extirpation died, that through the juxtaposition of practices and symbols the true message will eventually emerge.

The fiesta of San Pedro is quite clearly of the phenomenon described by Sallnow whereby particularly sacred rocks (**wak'as**) around which local cults had developed were coöpted by missionaries and the Extirpators of Idolatry into Christian shrines (Sallnow 1987). It is an example of a traditional Andean mythic motif of the transformation of telluric beings onto rock (MacCormack 1991:323; Sallnow 1987).<sup>16</sup>

In the ancient religion the Aymaras worshipped mounds and outcrops of rocks called **wak'as**. This practice continues on some regions of the **altiplano** (V. Astvalddson *pers. comm.*) but is not extant in the area of Pocabaya. The shrines above them were destroyed and frequently a Christian shrine built in its place. The Aymaras continued to worship the **wak'a** and over time the saint or its image was attributed with the tellurian

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<sup>16</sup> A supreme example of this phenomenon is the cult of the **Virgen de Copacabana**. Copacabana is the site of a pilgrimage centre dating back to before the Inca period and is on the shores of Lake Titicaca in the **altiplano** region. The Spanish converted this centre into a focus for Christian pilgrimage by erecting a large cross on the hill and later a magnificent basilica on the site. Copacabana retains many of the elements of the pre-Christian religion to this day. On the path up to the top are the stations of the cross. As the pilgrims make their way up, they place a small stone on a pile as they would do for an **apachita**, a sacred mountain pass (see below). At the very top is the large cross. But a few metres below are several small altars where the ritual practitioners, the **yatiris**, make burned offerings to the **Pachamama**. The Franciscans who administer the centre take a relatively benign view of all the other practices around them, including the burnt offerings, largely I believe, as the priest in San Pedro, because the consequences of disallowing such practices would mean the end of Copacabana as a site of pilgrimage for most of the devotees.

powers of the *Manqhapacha*. Copacabana and San Pedro are good examples of this phenomenon, which occurs all over the Andes:

Andeans placed their own holy objects next to Christian images of saints. In this way, while seeming to revere a Christian image, Andeans could secretly pay homage to their huacas. Indeed, the very appearance of Spanish religious images invited such an approach. For their sheer naturalism, their lifelike glass eyes, their blushing complexions, and their wardrobes filled with jewelled clothing, invited Andeans to perceive in them the huacas and mallquis of Christians, whose very existence authorised the worship of their Andean counterparts.

(MacCormack 1991:180-1)

It would seem that Pocabayenos have succeeded in convincing at least their local priest of their religiosity although his criteria are remarkably basic: belief in God, and Christian marriage and baptism. He considered the comprehension of basic tenets of Catholic belief such as Transubstantiation, Virgin Birth and the Mystery of the Trinity to be quite beyond them and therefore one could hardly have these as criteria for membership of the Catholic community. His stress on marriage and baptism not only to me but to Pocabayenos on the one occasion in two years he visited the community, is quite significant. These are the two things Pocabayenos require of the Church.

As far as Pocabayenos are concerned, attendance at mass is an irrelevance with the exception of the mass for the dead. They also thought the notion that a priest should attend to a funeral ceremony quite bizarre. The distance from Sorata and the infrequency of the priest's visits allow Pocabayenos to negotiate their own relationship with the Church to a large degree. With so little pressure from the Church, they are quite free to interpret Christian beliefs in a way that is meaningful to them without running the risk of being contradicted by the priest who does not, at any rate, speak Aymara.

The use of the cross in many rituals is not recognised as a referent to Jesus, at least not by Pocabayenos. As Isbell (1978:138) says of the people of Chuschi, it is a much broader symbol of general religious power which serves to remind participants of the sacredness and seriousness of the events under way. The place of the cross in religious belief is a good example of the appropriation of religious elements by the Aymara. After the Conquest, and especially during the Extirpation of Idolatry, officers of the Holy Inquisition destroyed many of the visible icons and shrines of local religion. They were, however, unable to raze entire mountains and in those cases they frequently

built chapels on top of them much in the manner of Copacabana. Mountain passes are, for the Aymara, an important focus of religious belief. These **apachitas**, as they are called, are mounds of stones offered to the **achachilas** and are often sites of simple offerings. Many of them have been marked with a cross and the cross has become an emblem of the potency of the **apachita**. This process continues in modern times. One example is an **apachita** on the way to the **altiplano** which was originally a pile of stones and stone altars where offerings and sacrifices were given. Then a large cross was placed there and finally, a chapel was built. The site continues to be the venue for offerings of alcohol and coca as well as small sacrifices.

It would appear that Andean Indians have heeded the words of the last Inca, Manko Kapak, in his valedictory speech:

The Christian God is only a painted image who can not speak; the wak'as on the contrary make their voices heard to their faithful worshippers; the Sun and the Moon are gods whose existence is plain to see. Should Indians be forced to be present at Christian ceremonies, they are to make a pretence of obedience, but secretly, they are to remain faithful to the traditional gods.

(in Wachtel 1977:173)

The cross, then, is a symbol of power in a wider sense and its presence can not be taken to mean that the site has a particularly Christian significance (*cf.* Gonzalez 1986; Bastien 1978:69). This is further illustrated by the belief that large mountains such as Illampu near Pocabaya have crosses on their summits. Illampu is one of the principal named **achachilas** of northern Bolivia. On its summit there is reputed to be a solid gold cross the height of a man.<sup>17</sup> The polysemic property of the symbol of the cross, Bastien argues, can tokenly satisfy the conquering people with one meaning whilst it can also refer to another meaning within the culture (1978:60). This 'polysemic property of the cross' may, however, be more due to the fortuitous juxtaposition of two separate symbols with different cultural referents rather than a single symbol with same referents for all involved. In fact, as Sallnow (1987:175) has argued, it is generally the case that the Christian system is largely devoid of symbolism for Andean peoples; it is a system of

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<sup>17</sup> I was also told this to be the case for another mountain **achachila**, Illimani. Illimani is a mountain 6,460 m high which is very near La Paz.

emblems, arbitrarily signalling division and union, equality and rank but lacking intrinsic motivation.

To expand on Tambiah's distinction between the indexical and symbolic component of ritual (1979:154 and *passim*) and following Sallnow (*op. cit.*) we can see that this distinction illuminates the difference between Christianity and the autochthonous religion of the animate landscape. "Both systems programme ritual processes of differentiation and hierarchy. But whereas in the one these processes necessarily operate through cultural ideas of fertility and reproduction, in the other they operate for the most part independent of such understandings" (Sallnow 1987:174). The duplex structure of ritual noted by Tambiah only holds true for Andean religion where through it the processes of natural and social reproduction are fused. Christian representation is devoid of symbolism in this sense and produces a series of indices of cultural difference, social status, civil power and historical domination.

With an understanding of this singular rather than duplex nature of Christianity, we can see that the juxtaposition of religious elements from both Christianity and autochthonous religion does not constitute 'syncretism' because these elements do not have the same symbolic content. It is once again because of this singular nature of Christianity that it can be and is seen as historically contingent rather than constituting an indispensable element of religious and social life.

Whilst accepting that God and Jesus preside over the cosmos in a broad sense, when it comes to daily life the traditional forces are of more practical help. It is worth noting here that, unlike many parts of the Andes, the worship of the Virgin is minimal: "She is just of the fiestas," as one Pocabayeno told me.

There are no Christian rites for making rain, for averting frost, or for producing a good harvest and it is in these agricultural rites that the pagan religion is most in force. There is no competition with the Christian deities since, contrary to the belief of the Spanish missionaries, the Aymara spirits are not conceived of in the same sense as Christian ones are. Aymaras enter into an exchange relationship with the **achachilas**, **Pachamama**, or **Tiu** who possess the forces of production from the earth, rain, mines etc..

There is no elaborated transactionalist ethic in the relations people have with God: with God there is no exchange relationship at all. There exists only a relationship of negative reciprocity: God visits his wrath upon the people below for no apparent reason and the people have no way of appeasing him. The one general exception to this is the

failure to baptise a child. This is the only occasion most of my informants could cite when God will predictably become angry. One informant, however, told me that the lack of a Christian wedding could likewise court disaster with God, and he expressed his concern at the fact that there were couples in Pocabaya who were not married and did not seem intent of ever doing so. Pocabayenos, however, frequently do not baptise their children until their second or third birthday and the lack of baptism is used as an *ex post facto* explanation for a calamity which has no other cause.

Despite the consistency of this belief among Pocabayenos, no one could cite an occasion when the failure to baptise a child did, in fact, result in ecological calamity.<sup>18</sup> God's punishment is conceived by Pocabayenos more as a continuous thing, the general and arbitrary source of sadness and pain, rather than a specific act of punishment.<sup>19</sup> This relationship with God is resonant of the view Pocabayenos generally have of the outside world (see chapter 3): a world of arbitrary hostility. Allen describes the way the people of Sonqo see God as a 'big Hacendado in the sky':

Imposed on a traumatised population after the Spanish Conquest, the Catholic God, modelled on the Hispanic *patrón*, epitomises Hispanic domination. He has nothing to do with [native people], yet they live and die according to his beneficence.

Allen (1988:52)

Allen provides us with an interesting insight for we can begin to see why (if God is hostile to Pocabayenos and given that they attribute their natural fertility so clearly to the **Pachamama** and attendant spirit of the earth matrix, the **Manqhapacha**) they would feel the need to have Christian baptisms and weddings.<sup>20</sup> For all the elaboration of relationships with the world of the **Manqhapacha**, Pocabayenos realise and accept that the over-arching presiding deity is the Christian one. There are then two related reasons for the necessity of baptism and Christian marriage. Firstly, is the need to protect fertility and individuals from the wrath of God. This is clearly partly accomplished

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<sup>18</sup> This is all the more remarkable given the abundance of evidence of ecological disaster in Pocabaya such as erosion, drought, crop pestilence, and floods.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Ochoa (1975d:10): God punishes the community and man. That is why we have the saying, **Diosaw k'apispacha** (God must be full of wrath), **ucatwa aqham llaquinac apayanistu** (this is why he visits these calamities upon us).

<sup>20</sup> At the root of this question is the essential relation between Pocabayenos and the world around them which is drawn out in terms of cosmology in the following chapter.

through baptism and a Christian marriage. It is my impression that this is regarded as a kind of insurance, a prophylaxis against a wrathful and jealous God. The second reason is that Pocabayenos are very aware of the importance Christian baptism and marriage has in Bolivian society: it is a badge of civilisation, the first step towards obtaining a Bolivian identity card and, like military service, an important step in being accepted by and included into that wider society. Moreover, as with the **hacienda** of old, Pocabayenos depend on God to function well in the national society and, more importantly, they were dependent on his good will to cultivate their land. Pocabayenos are analogously dependent on the Christian God, the power that be, for the freedom to cultivate their land and the land of their ancestors. As a result, the **Pachamama** and **achachilas** are not sufficient to ensure the well-being and fertility of people and their crops: because of the power of the Christian God, the earth matrix is in this sense deficient. Pocabayenos must harness the powers of the **Manqhapacha** on the one hand whilst ensuring that the wrathful eye of God is not cast upon them.

### **Todos Santos and Carnival: Christian or Aymara Feasts?**

As Christian shrines were superimposed on Andean ones, in an analogous way the major Aymara fiestas were attached to Christian ones. **Todos Santos** (All Saints) is the feast of the dead and is one of the two most important fiestas for the Aymara. I once asked a group of Pocabayenos whether the fiesta of **Todos Santos** existed before the Spanish came. They thought it over a little and discussed it among themselves and finally unanimously concluded that indeed, it predated the conquest (*cf.* MacCormack 1991:95-97).

**Todos Santos** is the fiesta when the dead are remembered. On the first day of the feast, every household which has suffered a death in the previous three years makes a **misa** for the dead. This involves constructing a table and covering it with all sorts of food and fruit and any favourite dish of the deceased. Sponge-cake is also a popular **Todos Santos** food. At the head of the table is an arch of cane and, hanging from it, generally figurines in various forms. This is, in fact, very similar to the structures created to welcome visitors to the village (above). It is thus that the dead are welcomed to the village.

Often several households will join together to prepare the items to be baked on the days before the fiesta. These groups form around the familiar constellations of family, **compadres** and **ayni** relationships. The atmosphere can be very relaxed and pleasant and all the members of the group, both young and old, male and female, will participate in the various tasks. Popular shapes for breads are the sun and condors as well as llamas. People visit the mourners of the recent dead (**machaqani**) and pray for the deceased in exchange for which they are given a bowl of soup. After they have eaten, the party continues to the house of another **machaqani**.

The following day the same table is erected over the grave of the deceased and the community gathers in the cemetery. **Todos Santos** is one of the very rare occasions when everyone washes and puts on their best clean clothes. Houses are swept and tidied before going down to the cemetery. All those in attendance will pray around each **misa** and after the prayers are said those who have prayed will be thanked and given a handful of fruit and biscuits. Slowly but surely, the altar is laid bare. This is an opportunity for poorer members of the community to get some free food and many take advantage of the situation. This is deemed perfectly acceptable and children too will make the rounds to collect as many biscuits and sweets as possible. This goes on until there is no food left and even the cane is distributed.

Prayers are said in Spanish and in Aymara. It is often the case that an older man will be asked to lead the prayers and others will follow him respectfully. Prayers are offered to the dead person represented by the altar but other names are also included, particularly those who are members of the deceased's family who have died in the previous three years.

Not everyone has a **misa** made for him or her. It seems to depend on the status of who has died and the amount of devotion the family has for the deceased. Children, especially very young children, very rarely have a **misa** at the cemetery. On the one occasion that I did see such a **misa** for a child, it was a relatively small affair and not much attended. The mother took coffee to the grave as her child particularly liked coffee and she had a few biscuits and sweets as well. Much larger and elaborate are the altars to the five or so adults who are so mourned. Other adults may have died than those so mourned and they will often be prayed for but for various reasons they will not warrant a whole **misa**. This may be because the person was a very old widow who lived alone and whose surviving children did not feel the need to go through the effort. Much

depends on the resources of the deceased's surviving family and their desire to remember them appropriately.

After all the **misas** have been laid bare, there is dancing and drinking right next to the cemetery. Woodwind instruments of the rainy season are played to summon the **achachilas**, ancestors who live in the mountain crags, and passes and who are responsible for the rain. **Todos Santos** is on November 1<sup>st</sup> just before the rains begin. That this is something of a rain ceremony is suggested by the kinds of instruments used, those to call the rain-producing **achachilas**.

It is said that the spirits of the dead come in **Todos Santos** and consume the food laid out for them. Although the tables are laid out for a particular person and prayers are directed to that person, prayers are directed to all the deceased people in general once it is considered that the individual souls are taken care of.

**Todos Santos** then, is simultaneously a feast for remembering individuals as well as the dead of the whole community (*cf.* Buechler 1980:80). The first two days of **Todos Santos** in Pocabaya are centred on the individual deceased but subsequent days are for the dead of the whole village who will bring rain and protect the village (*cf.* Harris 1982). There is thus a shift of emphasis from the individual to the community as the days go by. Once again we see how the individual's identity is subsumed under that of the community (see chapters 2 and 3).

There are also mock baptisms of **t'ant'awawas** (bread babies) as well as mock weddings performed by a farcical 'priest'. These are done complete with **padrinos** (see chapter 4) and witnesses. The 'priest' will also insist on being paid. Despite the farcical and humorous nature of the whole scene, it is taken with some seriousness: a young couple who have recently taken up residence together will choose respectable people to be the **padrinos** of their **t'ant'awawa** and hope they will repeat their sponsorship in the real thing. Here we can see not only the hoped-for fertility of the land brought by the rains but also the hope of fertility for humans as shown by their mock weddings and baptisms. Human and natural fertility are very closely linked.

These Christian elements are testament to the fact that Christian rituals are necessary to protect and underwrite human fertility in a world and time presided over by a Christian God (*cf.* chapter 2). The 'priest' is paid with real money as is a real priest for his services and, as we have seen, exchange mediated by money is typically the relationship Pocabayenos have with the non-Aymara world. Mock baptisms and weddings are analogues of their 'real' versions within the space of **Todos Santos**. If

**Todos Santos** is a festival which presents in condensed form the relationship between Pocabayenos and the supernatural, that is, the relationship with the dead and the denizens of the **Manqhapacha** such as the **achachilas**, the mock baptisms and weddings are a recognition of the fact that those very relations are to some extent contingent on the grace of the Christian presiding deities. On a broader scale and in a similar way, Christian baptism underwrites the fecundity of the **Manqhapacha**, the earth, which defines and originates human life.

### **Carnival**

The other great feast in the Aymara calendar is **Carnival**, the day before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent which in European Catholic countries is a final celebration before fasting and penance. In Europe and the Mediterranean it falls in the leanest time of the year. In Bolivia, Lent is the time just before the harvest. I was not able to find a single Pocabayeno who could tell me any relationship **Carnival** has with Ash Wednesday, Lent or Easter. In fact, in Pocabaya, as in many other rural communities, the festival of **Carnival** or **Anata** starts on Ash Wednesday itself and lasts up to a week.

In many communities, but not in Pocabaya, **Anata** is a ritual when people go to their fields and make an offering to the **Pachamama** for a good harvest. They put ribbons and confetti on the maize and **ch'alla** (libate) with alcohol. Sometimes a llama or sheep is sacrificed and the blood sprayed over the stalks. In Pocabaya the offerings to the fields takes place on the fiesta of **Candlemas** (Feb 2) a few weeks before **Carnival**. This discrepancy may be due to the fact that, because of the lower altitude and warmer climate, crops mature sooner than on the **altiplano**.

**Anata** takes place when the maize stalks should be high, auguring a good harvest. Once again there is a link between natural and human fertility. **Anata**, much in the same way as **Carnival** in parts of northern Europe, is the time when temporary social rules are suspended. Men and women are more likely to dance with people who are not their spouses than would normally be the case. These flirtations in dance sometimes conclude sexually (*cf.* Allen 1988:168). Similarly, although it is never made explicit, parents turn a blind eye to the sexual activity of younger people. **Anata** is the favourite time for a young man to 'capture' a girl and seduce her, and only later to present both sets of parents with the *fait accompli* of their formal union.

The formal part of **Anata** ends with the whole village "going to the cemetery" to dispatch the fiesta. Why the cemetery? At this time of year there is no room to dance around the cemetery because it is surrounded by maize. They therefore dance a few hundred metres away, on barren ground called **Itwito**; yet everyone said they were going to the cemetery. Harris (1982) has established a link between **Todos Santos** and **Anata** for the **Laymi** of Norte de Potosí and it seems plausible that the Pocabayenos are dispatching the dead they summoned with their music during **Todos Santos** in much the same way that the **Laymi** do.

For Pocabayenos being Catholic includes a number beliefs which would not be considered orthodox by the Church. What Pocabayenos are not is evangelical Protestants (**evangelicos**). Protestants do not believe in the **Pachamama** or the **achachilas** and above all, they do not drink<sup>21</sup>. Whereas it is quite possible to be Catholic and sacrifice llamas to a mountain God, to be an **evangelico** is to reject all and totally non-Christian beliefs.

## The Debate of the Varnishes

Most Pocabayenos, it must be said, are not as clear about their opinions of the Church as is Irkulyanu (above). Baptism is costly and inconvenient yet ultimately important in the final socialisation of the child into a wider world. Similarly, a Church-recognised wedding is the final step in the many stages that consist of uniting a man and woman in matrimony. Pocabayenos are perfectly aware of the greater legitimacy that baptism and a religious wedding give to them when they leave Pocabaya. It is similar to military service: military service has no utility within Pocabaya but any Pocabayeno who has done military service is less likely to be harassed by officials on the many occasions that it is required to present personal identification documents, also a baptism certificate is necessary to receive an identification card. Acceptance by and in the outside world, however, is becoming increasingly relevant within Pocabaya in terms of status and respect within the community. This is particularly the case with the younger generation.

The vagueness and even contradictory nature of Pocabayeno's ideas about God is testament to the small part these concepts play in their lives. It may very well be that

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<sup>21</sup> For an excellent account of evangelical Protestants in the La Paz area see Ströbele-Gregor 1989. On Protestants and drink see also Crandon Malamud 1991.

in the days of the **hacienda** there was greater contact with orthodox Catholicism through a priest's regular visits and through the **hacienda** himself. Today, however, there is very little such direct information and people expressed much uncertainty about their beliefs if they are indeed beliefs at all. Many statements were prefaced by, "I have heard that..." or "They say that...". These responses were entirely different from those elicited by questions relating to agricultural rituals, **achachilas** and the **Pachamama** to take a few examples. As these examples illustrate, Pocabayenos regard the Church and Christianity with agnosticism and even hostility.

The issue of syncretism is a continuing debate in Andean studies. On the one hand writers such as Abercrombie argue that Andean religion has gone through a development whereby both traditions, the indigenous and the European, have been absorbed and reforged into a new and coherent religion. Others (such as Harvey 1987; Bastien 1978) assert that Andean religion is a bifocal phenomenon where both traditions coexist in their essentially non-competing spheres. This debate, which Albó has called the 'debate of the varnishes', whether Andean religion is essentially autochthonous with a varnish of Christianity or fundamentally Christian with a varnish of indigenous beliefs, has continued in circles.

Whilst both positions have their validity and explanatory value, they essentially fail to account for the historical and political relationship between the two and how this is represented by Aymaras. If one takes this into account, we arrive at something of a non-question. Although all Pocabayenos (with perhaps a few exceptions) would unhesitatingly assert that they are Catholics, this cannot be taken to mean the same thing as a similar statement from an urban **mestizo** or white. Firstly, as should be now quite clear, the acceptance of Christianity, specifically Catholicism, does by no means preclude the acceptance of autochthonous powers in the same way that the acceptance of the Inca sun cult did not preclude an adherence to local cults. Secondly, with the spread of evangelical Protestantism in the area, the assertion that one is Catholic has come to include an assertion of adherence to traditional beliefs. This is because Protestant groups are adamant in their refusal to accept any form of 'pagan' or idolatrous beliefs. The Catholic Church's position is quite different as it is much more tolerant of indigenous practices and is not adamantly against the consumption of alcohol. Protestant groups in Bolivia are above all known for their opposition to the consumption of alcohol.

The conflict between the pagan and the Christian is not simply left with the kind of examples I have mentioned, such as **Todos Santos**, **Carnival** and the **fiesta of San**

Pedro. There is an historical parallel to this imposition of a national religion and it occurred during the times of the Incas (*cf.* MacCormack 1991:361; Allen 1988:52; Urton 1981:67). I suggest that in the same way that such an acceptance was largely a matter of the recognition of the temporal power of the Inca, the acceptance of Christianity is largely the recognition of the political power of the Spanish and their successors. We must be careful not to adopt an ethnocentric position and confuse a belief in the existence of a Christian God with an adherence to Christianity. The division between Christian and pagan has been elevated onto a different level, that of cosmology and mythologised history. With an understanding of native cosmology and history we will more fully be able to understand the issues that are the centre of the debates on syncretism and see that it goes far beyond the parameters which have traditionally constrained the discussion.

# Chapter VI

## Pacha

This chapter deals with the use of the term **pacha** in a common or grammatical setting to illustrate its various connotations. The concept of **pacha** and its various applications is a root concept in the Aymara *Weltanschauung*<sup>1</sup> as represented in Pocabaya. **Pacha** is a broad, multi-aspected and encompassing concept and informs not only how Pocabayenos see themselves in a cosmological framework but in a personal and intimate one as well.

In a broader framework, **pacha** is the principle by which Aymara cosmology is organised: There are three **pachas** of above, below and in between. The relationship of Aymaras, specifically Pocabayenos, with the attendant deities of the higher and lower **pachas** is discussed. It will be seen that the higher **pacha**, the **Alaxpacha**, is associated principally with the deities of the Christian world. The **Manqhapacha**, the **pacha** of below, is associated with the pre-Christian spirits and the past. Here the relationship is one of reciprocity and exchange as is usually the case with all Aymara, and indeed Andean, relationships, whereas the relationship with the Christian beings of above are notably lacking in this respect. At the interface of these two **pachas** is the **Akapacha** where human beings live. The ways in which Pocabayenos communicate with the beings of the **Manqhapacha** are discussed particularly with reference to the ritual specialists, the **yatiri** and the **ch'amakani**. Finally, the antinomy between the two **pachas** is outlined and it is shown that the Aymara cosmology provides a vivid metaphor for the cultural conflict between traditional Aymara and contemporary hispanic values. Aymara cosmology then, is not simply a cultural inheritance of times past, but a working metaphor which illustrates and articulates contemporary cultural and political conflicts. The Pocabaya version of their history illustrates how this cosmological metaphor also maps on to indigenous views of history. Their living relationship with the beings of the

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<sup>1</sup> Kant asserted that human experience is made intelligible through intuition, perception (*Anschauungen*), and concepts (*Begriffe*). It is my thesis that **pacha** as it occurs in grammar as well as linguistic postulates about time and space are intuitions in this sense. Together with the concept of **pacha** as developed in religion and cosmology they form the principal elements in the Aymara perception and understanding of their world (*Weltanschauung*).

**Manqhapacha** place them in contact with a living past: History for Pocabayenos is not divorced from the present, but continues to inform it; that is, Pocabayenos live in an historicised present.

## Pacha in Language and Grammar

For the Aymaras, space and time are inseparable (see Harris & Bouysse-Cassagne 1987; Hardman *et al.* 1981). It is quite clear that they view their world personally and intimately, and consistently locate themselves in time and space through their speech. In Aymara the most common tense used is the present/immediate past tense. There is also an historical past tense which is used when the speaker is removed personally from the events described; i.e., when the speaker has no direct experience of the event or s/he is so far removed from it that it does not directly impact on the present. In other words, when it cannot be 'seen'.

The unity of past and present in Aymara grammar is matched by similar conceptions of past and future. The past for Pocabayenos and Aymaras in general is imagined as being in front of the subject, visible and known. The word for eyes, **nayra**, is the same as for the past. The future, on the other hand, is behind and can not be seen.

The importance of space is illustrated by a number of locational suffixes used to denote spatial location; whether someone is coming or going, whether someone is actually at the very moment in the place indicated, whether one is there for a long period of time or momentarily. Space is thus intensely personal and this is made more so by the abundance of toponyms that were given by the **achachilas**, the ancestral spirits of the mountains and the land. These tutelary spirits themselves occupy a certain position in this named place and are a source of fertility and power.

To walk through the land around Pocabaya is, in a way, to walk with the **achachilas**. The word **sarnaqaña**, to walk, has a much wider definition than simply perambulation: it is a personal act that frequently involves libations and offering to the **achachilas** who are of the past but very much in the present.<sup>2</sup> When a Pocabayeno walks around Pocabaya and passes over and by the topographic features named and

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<sup>2</sup>For a fuller discussion of **sarnaqaña**, see Chapter Four.

inhabited by the **achachilas**, s/he is kinesthetically not only mapping the landscape (cf. Sallnow 1987), but being morally engaged with them.

Since space is so personally conceived,<sup>3</sup> the question of who I am is inseparable from the question of where I am. "[The Aymaras] cannot ignore their location because this would be a self-contradiction" (Cole 1969:35). The people of Pocabaya are defined by their relationship with their land and with each other: the situation of self with respect to others and to the land is an aspect of a cosmic exchange that sustains existence itself. This is why a permanent move to Sorata is not simply an act of geographical translocation: it is a rejection of the land of the **achachilas**, of the essential exchange relationship with the **Pachamama**, the earth matrix, and a rejection of the self. It is a logical step to the rejection of culture and a particular identity.

It is not often that the word **pacha** occurs alone and not as part of another word. When so used, **pacha** means earth. This is a heavily loaded concept. For the moment, though, it will be sufficient to point out that it is distinguished from **uraqi**, denoting 'earth' in the sense of the fertile soil. What makes **uraqi** fertile and productive is its element of **pacha**, which makes the earth productive and powerful as opposed to inanimate and crude earth. This distinction may owe something to the fact that the topsoil is particularly thin and bare rock pushes through it in many places. The topsoil is the 'fruit' of the mountain which makes it productive.

**Pacha** in the sense of meaning 'earth' and also on a more personalised level is referred to as **Pachamama**, 'Lady Earth' and is representation of the matrix of personalised forces of the world below, known as the **Manqhapacha** (Sallnow 1987:126).<sup>4</sup> **Pacha** is simultaneously temporal and spatial, referring to the Earth's extension and materiality at a particular moment in time (Allen 1988:45).

**Pacha** also means 'time' or 'epoch'. For example, the hacienda period is known as **patrunapacha**, the time of the **patrón** or master. The rainy season is known as **jallupacha**, **jallu** being the word for rain. At first glance, the concept of **pacha** as earth and then as time would seem to be quite different. Aymaras, however, do not maintain a discrete conception of a place and the events that have occurred there. Rather, their

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<sup>3</sup>For a fuller account of the Aymara conceptions of personal space see Miracle and Yapita (1981).

<sup>4</sup> For an account of how the image of the **Pachamama** has entered into the discourse of the metropolitan culture see Harris (1988).

understanding is of where the future and past are conceived as being located in space; thus the spirit of epochs inhabit various cosmological levels. Thus the essential spirit of the past, its *Zeitgeist*, is below the earth with all its attendant spirits whereas the *zeitgeist* of the present presides over the area above, the *Alaxpacha*. People are located in between these two *pachas* and it is my basic thesis that Pocabayenos find themselves having to negotiate between the forces of below and above: the past and the present.

There are a couple of other elements to **pacha** that must be adumbrated before discussing how they underline Aymara life. The first is **pacha** as 'totality'. For example, **taqi** means everything, but **taqpacha** means absolutely everything; **istansya** (Sp **estancia** - estate) means village but **istansyapacha**, the whole village. Another example is **maypacha** (**maya** = one) which means complete, undivided.

On another level, **pacha** works as a nominal inclusive suffix (Hardman, Vásquez and Yapita 1988:209):

**Jupanakapach sari** - they, all of them, have gone. [jupa - he; naka - plural; sari - third person 'to go'].

**Pacha** also works as a nominal suffix in a second sense, as 'it itself' or 'he himself', 'she herself' (*ibid*).<sup>5</sup> It does not work in a simple reflexive sense, that function being taken by the suffix - **si**. For example:

**jupapach jiwayasi** - s/he killed him/herself  
[jupa - s/he; **jiwayaña** - to kill but **jiwayasiña** to kill oneself; **jiwayasi** - third person reflexive].

Thus a literal translation: she herself, killed herself or he himself killed himself.

A final use of **pacha** is as an inferential verbal suffix (Hardman, Vásquez and Yapita 1988:148). It is an exception in that it has no sense of the spatio-temporal totality that is present in one degree or other in the examples mentioned above but I include it for the sake of completeness. It is part of a system whereby the speaker expresses that the knowledge he is expressing is indirect and not personally experienced.

The information which is expressed with this tense is obtained through indirect evidence by a process of deduction. The probability of

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<sup>5</sup> For a more extensive discussion of **pacha** in grammar see Hardman, Vásquez & Yapita 1988:148-9; 180; 228.

veracity or realisation of the information is fairly high: the time of the action is parallel to that of the simple past.

Hardman, Vásquez & Yapita (*ibid*)

An example of this would be **puripachawa** - s/he will come/arrive. This would be said when the speaker wants to assure the listener that 's/he will come' without giving the impression that this is a certainty derived from direct knowledge. The effect is one of assurance in support of the listener who is perhaps anxious about the arrival of the other person.

To summarise, then, there is a common element in the five notions of **pacha** outlined (the sixth being the exception). **Pacha** denotes encompassing totality, be it of time and space or person.

On a broader plane we can see how important time and space are for Aymaras. On a personal level, time and space are closely related concepts which are basic precepts of their *Weltanschauung* (Kant 1934 [1781]:41 *passim*) that is, their moral universe is founded on their *a priori* assumptions about time and space. I am not reproducing the argument, generally attributed to Sapir and Whorf, that categories of grammar determine the categories of thought. One can, nevertheless, without attributing any kind of deterministic relationship, assert that grammatical categories inform the basic concepts from which the symbolic system is founded. The personal intimacy with space which has been described as an Aymara postulate (Hardman 1981) would seem simultaneously to inform and be informed by an immanent cosmological system. The Aymara postulate of a past/present in front of the subject would seem both to imply a view of history whereby past events are reconstructed in present experience and be reinforced by such a view of history.

We will see now how these concepts of time and space are expressed on a cosmic level.

## The Pachas of Cosmology

The intimacy with the earth and the **Pachamama** is analogous and in fact a part of the exchange relationships one has with people:

We can not benefit from the goodness of the **Pachamama** if there is no reciprocity with her. The **Pachamama** must be fêted; the potato must be fêted... It is a kind of **ayni**: she gives, you give. You can not eat gratuitously nor can you take the sun gratuitously; you must return, you must **ch'allar** [libate], it is the way to return... We, the Aymaras, do not 'worship' but, rather, we do **ayni** or **mink'a** in reciprocity with the beings that protect us... What we do is that, since they are our elders, we repay them in **ayni** and **mink'a** because the **Pachamama** gives us the fruit.

Albó & Quispe 1987b:15-6<sup>6</sup>

**Ayni** and **mink'a** are modes of reciprocity which are considered to be the most appropriate and moral way of dealing with people. The basic idea is that labour is exchanged for an equal value of labour or the equivalent in goods. It is quintessentially a moral relationship fundamentally different to the kind of relationship one is likely to enter into with a **q'ara**, a non-Indian. Exchange is essential for the reproduction of the earth (**pacha**) who must be offered gifts in exchange for her fertility as well as for the social reproduction of society which is kept together by the exchange of labour and goods. In pre-Colonial times too "the maintenance of 'balance' (**ayni**) between social, natural, and supernatural forces was a predominant ideal" (Silverblatt 1987:173).

Pocabayenos locate themselves with respect to their own land as well as along two axes, the axis to the modern, non-Aymara world of metropolitan Bolivia and the axis to the **altiplano** heartland of their culture (see chapter 1). Cosmologically, Pocabayenos are located in between two **pachas**, that is, two matrices of space and time. Above is the **Alaxpacha** where God lives. This corresponds to the Christian heaven in the sense that it is the abode of God and has been so translated by missionaries; yet there is no Aymara concept of paradise associated with the **Alaxpacha**.<sup>7</sup> God is an abstract concept which does not actively participate in the quotidian affairs of the people except, occasionally, to punish (cf. van den Berg 1990). He is a veritable *deus ex machina*. The **Alaxpacha** is presided over by the sun who is sometimes referred to as **jisukristu** (Sp. Jesus Cristo - Jesus Christ) in much the same way as the **Pachamama** is often known as **wirjina** (Sp.

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<sup>6</sup> Gose (1986a:174) also argues that relations with the dead who provide rain are also construed as **ayni** and that "to provide drink in [funerals] is known as doing **ayni**" (Gose 1986a:106). He argues furthermore that "the principle explanation for the importance of libations in Andean ritual as a whole" is an **ayni** relationship with the dead whereby alcohol is exchanged for water in the form of rain (*ibid.* 113).

<sup>7</sup>See Chapter 5.

Virgen - Virgin). God himself was once described to me as the **Pachamama** of the **Alaxpacha** : "Alaxpacha tius pachamama ukaw", that is, as the presiding chief deity of that **pacha** in the same way as the **Pachamama** is the most important representation of the **Manqhapacha**.

Below is the **Manqhapacha**, the matrix of tellurian powers, which is where the **achachilas** live (even though they are often conceived of as high mountains) along with the **Pachamama** and other tellurian spirits such as the spirits of the mine. These powers are all part of the same matrix, of the same spatio-temporal totality, of the same **Manqhapacha**. In between is the **Akapacha** where we live - in between the heavens and the earth.

## **Manqhapacha**

**Manqhapacha** means, literally, the **pacha** of below and is often translated as 'hell' This is due to the evangelists' facile equation of the Christian underworld and the Andean underworld and the translation of the word **supaya**, which denotes a class of inhabitant of the **Manqhapacha** as **diablo** (Sp. devil).<sup>8</sup> There is, however, little infernal about the **Manqhapacha** and it is, in fact, the source of much positive as well as negative power. The **Manqhapacha** is the matrix of the productive forces of the earth. One can conceive of it as being inhabited by multifarious beings and spirits or as having various personified aspects. Whichever way one uses the concept, it is important to remember that the **Manqhapacha** is a spatio-temporal totality and not simply the place of residence of various chthonic beings: all these beings partake of the same unifying matrix.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Platt (1983) for a discussion on **supayas** as devils. See also Nash (1979).

<sup>9</sup> A useful way of understanding **Manqhapacha** is as *topos* and *tropos*. **Manqhapacha** as *topos* is a place, a commonplace but also in the sense of a rhetorician's place or topic for consideration of common themes. As a topic, **Manqhapacha** is a discourse about the past, fertility, identity and community and it is also a *tropos*, a trope. It is a trope for the discussion and representation of the very topics of discourse just mentioned. But *tropos* is also about turning (Gk. *trepō*). Pocabayenos turn to the **Manqhapacha** for sustenance and identity; the relationship is conceived in an alternation of debts; people are created of the **Manqhapacha** (see chapter 2) and return to it; and **Manqhapacha**, as we shall see below, is a turn of history.

(I must acknowledge a debt to Donna Haraway (1992) for the idea of *topos* and *tropos* even though she discusses these in an entirely different context.)

One principal element of the **Manqhapacha** is that it is associated with darkness and it is in the hours of darkness or in the dark that communication with the forces of below is most efficacious. Similarly, it is at night that its more malevolent manifestations are reputed to appear.

Most prominent among the tutelary spirits is the **Pachamama** and the **achachilas**. These are the major beings of the **Manqhapacha**, the ones to whom the largest part of Pocabaya ritual and supplication is addressed. Even though these different manifestations of the **Manqhapacha** matrix are held to be responsible for different areas of concern, and are generally talked about as if they were different supernatural phenomena, it must be stressed that they are, in fact, part of the same matrix of power.

### **The Pachamama**

**Pachamama** literally means Lady Earth or Madam Earth and she is described by Pocabayenos as being female. She is not depicted in art although it is often the case that her being is syncretised with that of the Virgin of Christian belief and is sometimes referred to as **Wirjina Pachamama**.<sup>10</sup> In Pocabaya, several people told me that they were one and the same whilst others simply said that the Virgin was nothing more than a statue paraded for the fiestas.

The powers of the **Pachamama** are particularly powers of fertility, specifically those endowing the fecundity of the earth but also that of animals. She is equally the 'patron of human procreation' in Girault's words (1988:6) and also presides over the general well-being of people. She is principally benevolent but can withhold her favours if the people do not pay her appropriate attention. She is the guardian of the earth's fertility and must be enticed to release her powers through various offerings. Like so many relationships, both human and superhuman, the relationship is generally conceived as one of reciprocated exchange whereby the **Pachamama** gives up her earth fertility for the benefit of the people in exchange for being fed with various offerings such as alcohol, coca and the blood of a sacrificial animal.

In Pocabaya the feast of the **Pachamama** is the feast of Candelaria in February (Candlemas). This is the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin although no Pocabayeno

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<sup>10</sup> The Virgin herself was however frequently depicted with motifs associated with the **Pachamama** such as in the form of the silver mountain of Potosí (Gisbert 1980). For a discussion of the **Pachamama** as the Virgin, see preceding chapter.

knew this or even that Candelaria had anything to do with the Virgin. Candelaria, in the middle of the rainy season, is when thanks are given to the **Pachamama** for her fertility. Each family goes into their fields to fête the **Pachamama** with streamers, confetti, flowers and, of course, alcohol. A few families in Pocabaya will even slaughter a sheep for her and spray the blood over the fields. This is spoken of as 'paying' the **Pachamama**. Candelaria is also the feast of the **kunturmamani**, the house spirits, which one Pocabayeno described to me as 'the **Pachamama** of the house'; that is, the particular manifestation of the earth matrix that is concerned with the household in the way that the **Pachamama**, is concerned with fertility in general. The houses are decorated with streamers and flowers and libations will be poured in honour of the **kunturmamani** on the floor inside the house.

### **The Achachilas**

The **achachilas** are specifically associated with the power of creating rain, and to this end various offerings are made to them. Through the **yatiri** or **ch'amakani**, the ritual practitioners, their aid can also be elicited to predict the future, for instance to find out the best time to plant or to discover the source of witchcraft. Much more than the **Pachamama** they are called upon on a regular basis to aid people.

The **achachilas** share with the **Pachamama** the position of most influential and important supernatural beings. In so far as they are conceived in an anthropomorphised form at all, they are conceived as old, white-haired men,<sup>11</sup> inhabiting the high mountain passes. The high snow-capped mountains are also known as **achachilas**. The word **achachila** literally means 'grandfather' but when talking about them, Pocabayenos make a conceptual break between their own human grandfathers (**achachi**) and the **achachilas**.<sup>12</sup> In so far as they are considered to be ancestors, the **achachilas** are not named and are the ancestors of all: that is, no genealogical link asserted with the **achachilas**, for their ancestorhood is usually conceived in an abstract rather than literal sense. Girault states that,

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<sup>11</sup> In the Andes it is very rare for people to live long enough as to have white hair.

<sup>12</sup> **Achachi.la:** **achachi**, grandfather, plus **-la** a suffix denoting affection (cf. the Quechua **machu.la**, Allen 1988).

...the origin of these spirits is closely related to the first structure of the indigenous community, the *ayllu*, which had one or several mystical ancestors, subsequently derived into a kind of deified tutelary spirit which watched over the destiny of the successive generations of this social nucleus.

Girault 1988:21

Girault, who worked in the altiplano around Tiwanaku and the Apolobamba region to the northeast of Pocabaya, uncharacteristically does not state his sources for this view.<sup>13</sup> If it ever was the case that the *achachilas* were conceived in such direct terms as ancestors it appears no longer to be the case, at least, certainly not in Pocabaya. It is more productive to think of the relationship between *achachilas* and Pocabayenos as a spatial relationship rather than a kinship one.

The *achachilas* are the maximal authorities of the village and are regularly consulted by the village seer, the *yatiri*. The *achachilas* are the beings who named the earth which is inherited by the people who live on it and work it. In Pocabaya, as in other similar communities, the *achachilas* are the guardians of the village and its territory. It is in this capacity that they have authority over all that goes on in the village, particularly with respect to moral matters. Lapses are said to anger the *achachilas* which could respond by causing a climatic catastrophe such as making hail fall<sup>14</sup> or delaying the rains.

Nevertheless, despite being called 'grandfathers', the *achachilas* are more often conceived as tutelary spirits of the mountains without specific form; they are nameless, with the exception of a few famous mountains (in any case, not names of ancestors). The temptation to assume an Africanist model of ancestor worship must be resisted. In the Andean case it is much more the elders who are like the *achachilas* than the *achachilas* like elders. That is, the relationship is reversed from that typical of some African models. The Pocabaya usage of the word in relation to living people is quite restricted

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<sup>13</sup>It may very well be that Girault's source for this tenuous theory is *El Ayllu*, an unscholarly and romantic work by Saavedra who also puts forth the scenario of the "first structure of the indigenous community" developing into an *ayllu* and *achachilas*. However interesting it is to contemplate such an evolution, there is no archaeological or historical evidence to support it.

<sup>14</sup> The fear of hail is much greater in the higher altitudes of the altiplano where it is quite common. In Pocabaya, hail is very unusual indeed but it is nevertheless cited as the most likely way the *achachilas* will show their anger.

although it appears to be more widely used in the altiplano as Pocabayenos are aware. Pocabayenos maintain a clear distinction between **achachi**, 'grandfather' and **achachila**, the spirits of the mountains.

The **achachilas** have an important link with the **Pachamama** beyond that of being part of the same matrix of tellurian forces. They are sometimes described as the husbands of the **Pachamama** in Pocabaya. This is not to say that the relationship between the two is one of husband and wife but, rather, that they form part of a productive union and share a common identity (see Chapter 4). Isbell (1978), however, makes the connection more concretely as the **achachilas** in the community of Chuschi are described as fertilising the **Pachamama** in unambiguously sexual language.

Another link with the **Pachamama** is the feast of Carnival, a principal feast for the **Pachamama**. The Aymara word for Carnival is **Anata** which would seem to come from the word 'play'. Ochoa describes **Anata** as a kind of **achachila** who comes once a year at this time and is associated with the spirits of the dead (Ochoa 1975b). Carnival then, seems to be simultaneously a feast for the **Pachamama** as well as for an **achachila**.

As the tutelary spirits of the land of Pocabaya as well as the people, the **achachilas** loom very large in the Pocabayeno's conception of his or her position in the world. The **achachilas** legitimise their position on the land and guard over them. To leave the **achachilas** is also to leave their protection and to be vulnerable to the hazards of the world beyond. Similarly, the nature of the Pocabayeno relationship with the **Pachamama** defines and legitimises them as humans and as a community. To farm and produce on the land is to be in relationship with the spirits of below: there is a unity that can scarcely be over-stressed between Pocabayenos as a community and the **achachilas** and **Pachamama** which is fundamental to their conception of themselves as human beings.

### **Other Beings of the Manqhapacha**

The **achachilas** and **Pachamama** are not purely benevolent deities in the Christian sense: they require payment and persuasion for releasing their powers and sometimes act in a capricious manner. This character of the **Manqhapacha** is more clearly expressed in the other beings that partake of this matrix. This is especially the case of the various beings that jealously guard the mineral products of the earth. The relationship with these beings is similar to that with the **Pachamama** in that it is conceived as an exchange of

items such as food, coca, alcohol and blood offered in exchange for the resources that these beings guard. As an activity then, mining is comparable to agriculture and is seen as such by Pocabayenos.

The **supaya** is the tutelary spirit of the mineral riches of the earth and, in mining regions is known as the **Tiu**. He is commonly represented in the form of the devil as known in Christian cosmology complete with horns and often with an erect penis. Miners make an offering of cigarettes and coca leaves to him and the **Pachamama** for protection and guidance to find the mineral they are seeking as they enter the mines. The **supaya** is yet another aspect of **pacha** as is suggested by the simultaneous offering to both him and the **Pachamama**. The **Tiu** is also sometimes represented in the form of a gringo in a cowboy hat - a symbol of modern prosperity and orgiastic abundance (*cf.* Nash 1979)<sup>15</sup> but is perhaps more commonly represented as a creature with great horns and bulging eyes such as in the various fiestas of Carnaval in mining areas. In the same way as Pocabayenos enter into an exchange relationship with the **Pachamama** in the fields by making libations and sacrifices (**wilachaña**<sup>16</sup>) at various times of the year, so do they with the **Tiu** of the mine. The **Tiu** sometimes jealously guards his minerals and at other times gives in abundance; he is as capricious as the **Pachamama** and **achachilas** in controlling the weather and fertility of the soil.

One such pact with the denizens of the **Manqhapacha** is described by Tiudusyu. In this case it is the **anchañchu** with whom the man has made a deal:

In Sorata (sic) in a gold mine, there is a man by the name of Pedro Loza and he made a deal for himself and he is a rich man. Now why would he be so rich? He is like us: he walks/lives as we do, he works the fields as we do. Could it be because of this that he is rich? He does not pay attention to people: he has already spoken

Surat akatan quri mina mā wir Pir Lusa  
satanaw ukaw chacha ariylasi chach qullqini.  
Ukat kunas qullqinipach?  
Ukat jiwasjamarakiw sarnaqaskaraki yap  
luraski ukat qullqinipacha?  
Janiw jaq yatkiti lastimaki pay ukax  
anchañchun parlataxatañapi.

<sup>15</sup> See also Taussig (1980) and a critique of his thesis of the 'devil' as an example of the fetishisation of capitalism by Platt (1983)

<sup>16</sup> **wila.cha.ña**: **wila**, blood; **cha**, to make or do; **ña**, infinitive. Thus literally: to make blood.

with the **anchañchu**. This **anchañchu**, this being of powers of the mountain is from inside/below and is rich. One of these (**anchañchus**) comes from the River Thikat and the river flows very full. Then this **anchañchu** goes on top of an outcrop of rock. If you were to go coughing badly [with tuberculosis] he may cure you. From this good rock he can talk to you and make a deal...Now beer, wine, wine made from grapes, undiluted alcohol "That is what I want" he says. And not in a canteen but in a glass flask. Those cups must be like a mirror, made of glass [ice]. Well, that is where Pedro Loza went and made a good arrangement for himself. Even his wife has expensive clothes and has gold teeth.

Aka anchañchu aka khurin qarqa aka manqhankiw akiriw atjirin qamiri maya aksat sarix maya thikat jawirat mä jawira juti akhamaw tupt'at.

Ukat pataxankiw uka qarqar anchañchuwa. Sarasm a x usus wal ususma yatxapayiristampi.

Ukax kusa qaratak parlanxpaxa. ...Jichhaxa kuktila, sirwisa, winu, juwas winum, alkula janumamp alkul pura munix siwa.

Ukat ukaxa janiw aka cantinachi: chhullunkhaya.

Uksä kupanaka utjij ispijamaxa chhullunkhaya.

Ukhamataynaw uka Pir Lusaxa wal arilasi wali lij siñurapas suma waluran isinakan uskuntata qurirum, lakani.

Pocabayenos do not conceptually separate mining from agriculture as they do other labour in the market economy. The term used by Pocabayenos for wage labour is **trawajaña** (Sp. trabajar - to work). **trawajaña** is not generally used for labour in the fields: rather, such labour is described by the specific activity involved, be it sowing, tilling, ploughing, etc. If a more general term is used it is **yap luraña**, to 'do' the fields. Similarly, when Pocabayenos go to work in the gold mines they use the term **qurapsuña**, to extract gold; on the other hand wage labour in Sorata is definitely **trawajaña**.

The miners of Oruro (in the highlands to the south) believe that nuggets of minerals grow in the same way as potatoes do (Platt 1983:49). In the jungle mining areas of Guanay and Tipuani where Pocabayenos go to extract gold, not only are cigarettes, coca and alcohol offered to the **Tiu** as is done to the **Pachamama** in the fields, but every August, a llama is brought all the way from the **altiplano** to be sacrificed to the **Tiu** of the gold mine. August is a month traditionally associated with wind and **saxra**, mischievous and diabolical figures (similar to **anchañchus**) of the **Manqhapacha**. The llama is either sacrificed and burned in offering at the mine entrance

(the remains to be offered to the **Tiu** inside) or it is actually bricked up alive in the mine itself. Miners also talk about mines being 'tired' (**q'ariwa**) and needing rest (**samarañ muni**), in the same way as they would about fields laying fallow. The **Manqhapacha**, then, is a matrix in both senses of the word: as a womb and a source of growth and fertility as well as a mass of rock enclosing minerals such as gold, silver and salt.

We can see then how the relations Pocabayenos have with the beings of the **Manqhapacha**, be they **achachilas** or **anchañchus**, are rooted in the same models of reciprocity and exchange. The **Pachamama** is fêted in Pocabaya with confetti, alcohol and sheep's blood so that she may give of her fertility and make the maize and potatoes grow; the **Tiu** is similarly given coca, alcohol and a llama in sacrifice so that he may give up the gold.

For Pocabayenos there is a distinction between the **supaya** which is a singularly conceived tutelary spirit of the minerals of the earth (with a different representation in each mine) and the **saxra** which is a generic term for malevolent nocturnal beings. It is the **saxra** rather more than the **supaya** who conform more to the Christian idea of a diabolical entity. **Saxra** take many forms: sometimes they are seen as spots of light,<sup>17</sup> others yet as having the figure of a man with the face of a cat. One Pocabayeno described a **saxra** to me which looked like a vulture (**siwiqara**) with green, yellow and red tail feathers<sup>18</sup>.

Descriptions of the **saxra** vary enormously - he is reported to appear even as a Spanish noble (Girault 1988:86) - but what is common to all accounts is that they roam at night in places where people rarely go. One informant described the places where **saxra** appear as deep gullies, impressions in the earth and abandoned tombs; places that go into the earth. As we saw above, darkness and night are associated with the powers of the **Manqhapacha** and **saxra** appear in those place that go into the earth or where one has access to the spirits of the **Manqhapacha** such as mountain passes. **Saxra** are universally described by Andean people as uncontrolled malevolence, the kind of malevolence that makes people ill.

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<sup>17</sup> Harris (1982) reports that the light of fireflies is often said to be the souls of the dead.

<sup>18</sup> These happen to be the colours of the Bolivian flag.

All these beings of the **Manqhapacha**, be they more or less malevolent, are all part of the same phenomenon; that is, they form part of the same autochthonous matrix (cf. Sallnow 1987; see also Bouysse-Cassagne & Harris 1987:48).

A miner once told me (and this was repeated on different occasions by other miners), "When I am above ground I believe in God and I am a Christian; but when I am in the mine I believe in the **Tiu**." This statement seems to clearly define the belief in **pachas** presided over by different deities or tutelary spirits. **Alaxpacha** is above and therefore has absolutely nothing to do with the activity inside the mine. The mine worker clearly recognises the power of the **Tiu** below as he does the power of God above.

## **Alaxpacha**

The **Alaxpacha**, literally, the **pacha** of above, is much less immediate than the **Manqhapacha**. The people of Pocabaya define themselves by their activity with the earth which supports and nourishes them; yet above them is the **Alaxpacha** with its own beings. There is a vague notion among Pocabayenos that when they die their **alma**, their Christian soul, goes to heaven. **Alma** is the Spanish word for soul which is distinguished from the Aymara soul, **ajayu**. It is believed that this **alma** potentially has powers to intercede in the lives of those it leaves behind. These powers are almost exclusively described as negative. The whole point of saying masses for the dead is not to improve their lot in heaven but to please them sufficiently so they will do no harm to those below. The more traditional concept of soul is 'ajayu' which must join the body in the ground at death.

**Alaxpacha** is considered by some to be inhabited by God and his saints although not all Pocabayenos were in full agreement about this. **Alaxpacha**, says Bertonio (1612), "is where the saints dwell" but for the Pocabayenos the saints don't live in heaven, but in the churches. Unlike in many other parts of Bolivia, there are no local saint cults that figure importantly for the Pocabayenos apart from the feast of San Pedro mentioned in the previous chapter.

Among the Pocabayenos the concept of the **Alaxpacha** is particularly vague. God, is the presiding deity but of what? He and his component, the sun, don't interfere in the quotidian affairs of Pocabayenos.

The **Alaxpacha** is, above all, invoked by the priests who are structurally and logically opposed to the **yatiris** and the **ch'amakanis**. In more orthodox forms of Catholicism, children are baptised so that their soul, **alma**, may go to heaven. This is not the reason given to me by Pocabayenos for baptising their children (see previous chapter). Even with the absence of saints in the Pocabaya cosmology, **Alaxpacha** is a quintessentially Christian place and quite in contrast to the forces of **Manqhapacha**.

## Communication with the Beings of the Manqhapacha

It is with the forces of the **Manqhapacha** that Aymaras must deal for fertility and protection and it is thus with them that they have developed various means of communication.

The most obvious way in which people communicate with the beings of below is through offerings. I will follow van den Berg's schema by dividing these into simple offering and composite offerings (van den Berg 1990:175). Both simple or composite offerings can be made in a group such as the whole village, or as an individual with the aid of one of the ritual specialists, the **yatiri** or **ch'amakani**. The simple offerings are coca, alcohol and tobacco. In Pocabaya these are rarely consumed other than in ritual occasions. They are also exclusively consumed by adults, men more than women. Older people may also chew coca on non-ritual occasions and it is deemed quite acceptable for them to do so in contrast to the disapproval that would be expressed about a younger man who was regularly seen chewing coca outside the prescribed contexts. The implication is that this type of communication with the **achachilas** favours men over women and older men over younger men.

Coca is particularly favoured by the **achachilas** and it is by reading coca leaves that the **yatiri** divines their will. Alcohol, especially maize beer, **k'usa**, is consumed at fiestas and celebrations<sup>19</sup>. Whenever someone partakes of alcohol a few drops are given to the **Pachamama** or **kunturmamani**; alcohol is frequently offered to the **achachila** of

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<sup>19</sup> Nathan Wachtel notes that the consumption of both alcohol and coca was strictly restricted to priests and **curacas** (leaders) in pre-colonial times (Wachtel 1977).

a mountain pass as one passes through it. Pocabayenos never smoke tobacco other than on festive or ritual occasions. As with alcohol and coca, it is always shared.

Composite offerings are known as **misas**, probably from the Spanish **mesa**, table, but in Aymara it is homophonic with the Spanish for 'mass', **misa**. A **misa** usually involves a variety of substances including wool, incense, copal, confetti, sweets, candles, llama foetuses and llama fat to name but a few.<sup>20</sup> The object of the **misa** as with the simple offering is to feed and fête the spirits of the **Manqhapacha**. It is important to remember that Aymaras do not worship their 'deities' but rather feast and fête them: the relationship is one of exchange. These spirits become hungry and thirsty as do humans and the latter must thus take care to see that they are well fed and happy in exchange for which they will make the skies rain and the land fertile or, in the case of mines, make the mine produce.

Tiudusyu, an elderly Pocabayeno, explains one way of offering to the **achachilas** and the retribution if the **achachilas** are not given the appropriate offerings:

"We will eat together" is what we say. And then saying "With your permission" the sign of the cross is made. "May that all the love and affection in the house be not diminished", saying this, a sign of the cross is made. Now we all eat together. We drink, chew coca and smoke. This is how the **achachilas** come from far away; this is how we pay them. Then the **achachilas** bless the door of the house. On our knees we ask them that our grandchildren not become ill and that they be given memory (*amuyt'asi*). May they have money. These blessings the **achachilas** bring. Then alcohol and flowers are moved in a circle whilst saying one's name and then the wind blows the (spirit) away. Every year they must be paid in this way. We must not forget next year.

If, for one year, one forgets to pay, they may take one's wife or husband. In this way one may lose cattle. Before, when I paid regularly my animals were many: thirty were my cattle, three were my mules, three pigs would I butcher every year and forty sacks of grain would I produce. I had children and they grew up to be married. And then I stopped paying. My wife was taken away and one day my 74 sheep were found dead. I went to the mill in Sorata and when I returned the meat of those sheep was gone. That is how I remained, in misery, because I was too stupid not to pay. That is why one must pay with coloured wool, with money, with a llama foetus and many small sacks of powders.

There are three other ways of communicating with the spirits of below. The communal meal, the **wayq'asi**, is not only an act of communion with the community but

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<sup>20</sup>For a semiotic analysis of a **misa** see Martinez 1987.

also one with the tellurian spirits. The **wayq'asi** appears to be an institution particular to the area around Pocabaya and not known in the altiplano where there are other kinds of communal eating. The importance of eating, drinking, smoking or chewing coca as a **group** for the spirits of below should be noted.

Dancing under the influence of alcohol is also an important means of augmenting or resuscitating the fertility of the **Pachamama**. In village fiestas two men will dress up as **awichachachi**<sup>21</sup>, an old man and woman, who will go around dancing with abandon making lewd gestures and mounting each other and others in sexual mimicry. This, I would suggest, as with dancing, is to create a sexual atmosphere and fertilise or sexually arouse the **Pachamama**.<sup>22</sup>

Lastly, one must include music. These days it is an expression of prestige to have a brass band in village fiestas but the traditional woodwind instruments continue to play an important role even if their deep tone is so frequently drowned out by the cacophony of the brass. These **pinkillus** and **tarqas** provide the deep tones to summon up the **achachilas** to provide rain. The **siku**, panpipe, is favoured for the dry season.

The object of this communication in a generalised form is to maintain an equilibrium between the community of people and the spirits below. It is a give-and-take relationship which must be kept in balance for the well-being of all. "In our worldview we encompass man, the earth, the animals and all of nature. There is reciprocity on all these levels", says the Aymara Calixto Quispe (Albó & Quispe 1987b:13). The importance of reciprocity is fundamental to the Aymara understanding of a 'proper', moral relationship between people themselves and between people and the supernatural world. "The interrelationship between all the components of the universe and the reciprocity between those components reveal a fundamental equilibrium which is the basis and the essential support of the existence itself of the cosmos" (van den Berg 1990:158).

Supernatural powers have a preference for rituals performed in a group. There is an intimate relationship between human solidarity and harmony and cosmological harmony. Nothing could be more different from the Calvinist alone before God: Pocabayenos must confront their deities as part of a group, a community; a community

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<sup>21</sup> **Awich.achachi** is in fact a combination of two words **awicha** grandmother and **achachi** grandfather.

<sup>22</sup> This is clearly the function of the **tinku** a ritual battle not extant in Pocabaya.

which lives on the land of the **achachilas** and maintains a relationship of equilibrium with the **Pachamama**.

## The Ritual Specialists: **Yatiris** and **Ch'amakanis**

There are two ritual specialists who communicate with the supernatural: **yatiris** and **ch'amakanis**. The word **yatiri** is frequently used for both as well as for herbalists, **qulliris**. There is, however, a very important distinction between the two: whereas **ch'amakanis** are considered to communicate directly with the **achachilas**, the **yatiris** are only able to divine their message through reading coca leaves. All **ch'amakanis** are **yatiris** but not vice versa; similarly, all **yatiris** are **qulliris** but not all **qulliris** are **yatiris**.

### **The *yatiri***

The word **yatiri** comes from the verb 'to know', **yatiña**, plus the personalising suffix denoting profession, **-iri**. Thus the word means 's/he who knows'. A **yatiri** is expected to be an expert **qulliri**<sup>23</sup>; that is, he will have much knowledge of the multifarious herbs and roots that make medicines to cure illnesses of the **chuyma**, the basic life force. His real value is his ability to divine, with the help of the **achachilas**, the cause of illness to the spirit, **ajayu**, through the medium of coca leaves. A **yatiri** can not communicate directly with the chthonic powers but only through his leaves or the leaves of the supplicant: thus, he is basically a diviner. Huanca also reports that a **yatiri** is basically defined in the community by his ability to read coca leaves. He also points out that the polite way to ask whether or not someone is a **yatiri** is to ask if he can read coca leaves: **kukat uñiritacha?** (Huanca 1989:43).

A **yatiri** is supposed to be chosen by the **achachilas** and the sign given is that of being struck by lightning: all individuals hit by lightning are potential **yatiris** although in effect this is not the case. There are many people who, despite being hit by lightning, choose not to become **yatiris**; and one can still become a **yatiri** by apprenticing oneself to a **yatiri** without ever having been touched by lightning. Nevertheless, it is widely regarded to be so that a **yatiri** is chosen by the **achachilas**.

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<sup>23</sup> **qull.iri**: **qulla**, medicine plus **-iri**. Thus: doctor.

## The ch'amakani

A **ch'amakani** is literally someone who possesses the power of darkness or of the night.<sup>24</sup> He is the supreme ritual specialist and his knowledge enjoys authority over that of all other ritual specialists such as normal **yatiris** who can be found in every community. **Ch'amakanis** are not found even in the high valley areas such as Pocabaya, but in the higher areas of the altiplano or mountains (**Ch'amakanix sunin utji patana**).

**Ch'amakanis** are used by Pocabayenos in extreme occasions, usually to identify a murderer or elicit information from the dead since they are communicators with the dead *par excellence*. A **ch'amakani** will frequently use a human skull (**riwutu**), a symbol of the **achachila**, as a medium to locate the dead spirit and communicate with it. When a Pocabayeno drowned in the river on the way to Sorata, his wife went to visit a **ch'amakani** for help at least to locate the body if not resurrect him from the dead. To the relief of all the body was found, for without a proper burial in the land of Pocabaya he could be buried in the land of the **achachilas** and his spirit (**ajayu**) would roam the area attacking people in his frustration. Once again we see the importance of space and, above all, moral space for the Pocabayenos. People are the products of the earth and its powers and are as rooted to it as any crop. At death the dead must be returned to the earth in the appropriate manner.

A **ch'amakani** is created when an established **ch'amakani** hears from the **achachilas** that a particular **yatiri** is worthy and capable of being transmitted the knowledge. There are very few **ch'amakanis** and I was warned that some of these were charlatans because a wide reputation can be quite profitable. Unlike **yatiris** who can not speak to the **achachilas** but only divine their will or communicate with them through coca leaves, the **ch'amakani** is a full-time specialist and not a member of the community in the way a **yatiri** is.<sup>25</sup> I was told that a true **ch'amakani** only survives three years after he is initiated. I could not elicit why this is though to be so, but there are parallels with miners who make a pact with the spirit of the mine, the **Tiu**, so that he may tell where the gold is. The same period of three years frequently crops up when recounting stories of miners who have made a deal with the **Tiu**. Not forgetting that the **achachilas** and

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<sup>24</sup> **ch'amaka.ni:** **ch'amaka** is darkness and **-ni** is a suffix of possession.

<sup>25</sup> A **yatiri** will often travel to visit a **ch'amakani** to consult on a particular problem and try and learn as much from him as possible.

the spirit of the mine are part of the same matrix (*pacha*) of natural forces, there may be a similar mephistophelean trade-off with the **achachilas** to obtain their counsel and harness their powers.

There is a sense in which life can be seen to be a gift or a loan from the **Pachamama** and **achachilas** (*cf.* Chapter 2). Death is consequently an offering or payment for the fertility and production that a person has enjoyed. For most people who pay the **Pachamama** and the **achachilas** regularly and appropriately, the payment of their own life in exchange for productive capability can be delayed until the end of a natural life. An equilibrium is achieved between what one pays and what one receives. When more is demanded of the tellurian beings than is normal in a human life, these beings claim the life at an earlier date. If a person demands too much of the tellurian powers, or commits an act of hubris, they will claim the person's life in payment. Miners who extract from the underground are a typical example of this. The **Tiu** must be paid regularly, and occasionally an offering of a llama is made as a human substitute. The **Tiu** will sometimes claim a life in payment nevertheless. A **ch'amakani** who demands special powers from the **achachilas**, is similarly required to pay more.

Both the miners and the **ch'amakani** are engaged in a relationship with the beings of below. The miner makes offerings of coca, alcohol and llama foetuses or a live llama to the **Tiu** so that he may release his gold; the **ch'amakani** makes the same offerings so that he may receive knowledge from the **achachilas**. A miner who wishes to extract a prodigious amount of gold, will go beyond the sacrifice of a llama which is seen as a substitute for humans, and will agree to give up his life some years hence so that he may be rich in the present. The miner will make a pact with the **Tiu** to obtain knowledge of the whereabouts of gold; the **ch'amakani** enters into a pact with the **achachilas** for a different kind of knowledge. Tiudusyu, the **yatiri** of Pocabaya, has a **ch'amakani** mentor whom he refers to as his father (*awki*) but when I pressed him on this he replied that the **ch'amakani** was, in fact, his godfather. Whether or not this is in fact the case, it is clear that the **ch'amakani** is in a position of tutor or mentor. He approaches this **ch'amakani**'s house at night carrying a lantern or torch. He approaches the door with respect and waits until he is told he may enter. He then presents the **ch'amakani** with alcohol and food before the lantern is extinguished and he begins to speak in a low voice with his mouth covered (*llupantasapuniw parli*).

The **ch'amakani** uses the same elements as the **yatiri** for divining the will of the **achachilas**: above all the **inkuña** for reading the coca leaves, alcohol and the other

powders and herbs the *yatiri* will use, as well as candles, especially those made of llama fat. The *ch'amakani* will also use a *riwutu*, a human skull, which is a quintessential element of the *ch'amakani*'s trade. Huanca (1989:72) describes it as the *ch'amakani*'s "principal assistant and counsellor". The *riwutu* is particularly efficacious in locating lost people and when so used, the skull is placed among the ritual objects and some items of the clothing of the person sought.

Skulls are used in other contexts by ordinary people particularly to urge the *achachilas* to reduce the amount of rain they are sending in an especially wet year. These skulls are, however, not *riwutus*. "Riwutus apparently belong to people who were murdered or died in violent circumstances, in accidents, and are not skulls of people who died of natural causes. These *riwutus* act as intermediaries between humans and the spirits of the dead and even of the living" (Huanca 1989:72-3).<sup>26</sup>

The fact that a *riwutu* should have met his end in such circumstances is consistent with the belief that spirits of people who die a violent death and whose spirits are not properly disposed of are not laid to rest and are potentially malevolent: they neither leave this world nor go into another. The *ch'amakani*, then, exploits these wandering spirits for his own ends even though dealing with such spirits is potentially quite dangerous. They are the source of much fear and anxiety among normal people.

The power of the *ch'amakani* to communicate with the 'spirits' is far greater than that of the common *yatiri*. Even though he may use the *riwutu*, I was told on several occasions that a *ch'amakani* can dispense with the *riwutu* and communicate directly with the *achachilas* and speak with them. It is because *ch'amakanis* communicate directly with the *achachilas* that I refer to them as shamans. Tiudusyu told me that *achachilas* only speak in Aymara. He suggested that it could be possible for some other kind of *achachila* to speak Spanish but knew of none and was quite certain that there would be none in Bolivia. It seems clear that *achachilas* are considered to communicate only in Aymara.

*Ch'amakanis* are further divided into two categories, *uru ch'amakani* and *arum ch'amakani*. The first is one who possesses the power during the day and the second who possesses the power during the night. Huanca notes that, "Although both are

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<sup>26</sup> The use of in this manner of human skulls of people who have suffered a violent death is not confined to the Andes. For a comparable phenomenon among religious ascetics in Benares (India) see Parry (1982).

masters who can communicate with the [achachilas], it is said that the former is more powerful than the latter because he can conquer the light of day, and darken it to be able to cure the patient" (Huanca 1989:46).

Darkness is associated with the powers of below whereas light, especially sunlight, is associated with the **Alaxpacha** presided over by the Christian god and saints which, together, are associated with the temporal power of the dominant hispanics (see chapter 1). As the **yatiri** of Pocabaya told me, "The **supayas** and **anchañchus** are of the night; the day is of the Christians and God."<sup>27</sup> The more powerful **ch'amakani** is one who can conquer the powers of the day; that is, not only can he operate during the time of the **Manqhapacha** (night) but also during the time of the **Alaxpacha**.

Night and day, **Manqhapacha** and **Alaxpacha**, are clearly opposed and each is associated with its respective cultural spheres. If one associates the **Alaxpacha** with the world of metropolitan culture as is implied by the Christian element and the non-reciprocal (or negatively reciprocal) relationship Pocabayenos have with that sphere, then it would seem that the **ch'amakani** conquers not only the day, but vanquishes the supernatural forces and deities of the ruling ethnic group.<sup>28</sup> This testifies that the historical dominance of the **Alaxpacha** is not complete and that the forces of the **Manqhapacha** can still overcome it. On a sociological level it is also interesting to note that to cure a patient, a **ch'amakani** must not only harness the powers of the **Manqhapacha** (beneficent forces) but vanquish the powers of the **Alaxpacha**, which by implication, if not the source of maleficent forces then forces inimical to the positive healing forces of the **Manqhapacha**. Modern medicine (which must be included in the sphere of the **Alaxpacha**) is only efficacious when dealing with illnesses of the **chuyma**, the kind dealt with by the **qulliri**, herbal doctor; serious spiritual illness can only be dealt with by **yatiris** and **ch'amakanis**: it is considered powerless to deal with serious illness, illness of the **ajayu**, spirit.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Supayanakamp añañchumpix arumaxa uruw kristian yusanki.

<sup>28</sup> See Harris 1982:84-5 "God's sphere is worshipped by day and offered masses and incense, while the [manqhapacha] is worshipped by night with offerings of dried animal foetuses and an aromatic plant named **q'uwa**, which is burned to accompany all invocations to devils."

<sup>29</sup> For a study on how Aymaras of the **altiplano** choose between Western and traditional medicine and the implications of each, see Crandon Malamud 1991.

## A Pocabaya History of the Andes

Darkness is an element of the **Manqhapacha**, as is the past. As we shall see in the Pocabayeno version of Andean history, the contemporary conflicts between Hispanic and Aymara culture can be seen not only in terms of light and darkness, **Alaxpacha** and **Manqhapacha** but in historical terms. The indigenous version of this pre-history begins with the time of the **chullpas**, and Pocabaya accounts of this time are very similar to accounts all across the central and southern Andes.<sup>30</sup> Before the time of the sun, people lived in darkness. Remains of their houses are seen throughout the area. Pocabaya itself also has a **chullpamarka**, a **chullpa** 'village', on its land. Several hundred metres above the village proper near the top of the mountain, there are remains of a settlement, consisting of several well-preserved terraces around a central area. The area is littered with pottery shards and one can still detect doorways and jamb stones. This are quite probably the remains of an Inca fort or perhaps even a Mollo one.

**Chullpa** ruins typically are above-ground tombs which are known to have contained mummies. These tombs have east-facing doors. The term **chullpa** originally referred to the tomb complexes of various Aymara kingdoms (Bouysse-Cassagne 1987:183). The legend goes that the **chullpas** heard about the coming of the sun and built these houses to hide from its rays. They made the mistake of the thinking that the sun would rise in the west. When it rose in the east they were all burned to a crisp. The desiccated mummy remains give the impression of burning. Irkulyanu described these people as follows:

They are not people of this world; but these others were not wanted by God but were non- believers. Those people of the past were of the underworld, they were called gentiles, we call them gentiles. These people are also our kith, they are not really then different.

Jupanakax janiw aka muntu jaqisti; piru uka wasa janiw tiusan munat taqin mä mapitu jay ukax nayra mä yanqhajaqispas jay ukham jaqikirirakipi ukax jintilis sat sum jiwasa sistan jintilis. Ukax mä jaqi masisaskarikiw janiw ukaxa wasa jaqikikapunirakiti.

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<sup>30</sup> See for example Allen (1988) and Ochoa (1973) for the Cuzco area of Peru. See also Bouysse-Cassagne (1987), Harris (1987) for Bolivia.

The belief expressed by Irkulyanu is that those who preceded the age of the sun came from the underworld and are somehow akin to people today ("**masisasaskarikiw**"; and "**janiw ukaxa was jaqikikapunirakiti**"). Darkness is associated very closely with the powers of the underworld. The **chullpas** are thus described as non-believers because they literally do not accept God (**mapitu**). They do, in fact, exist in a time before the coming of God. This is central to the issues surrounding Andean syncretism. Once we see that the acceptance of God is an acceptance of a political reality as opposed to an adherence to a particular faith, then we can understand the **chullpas**, not as pagans who dwell outside the moral sphere, but as beings who lived before the ascendance of the Christian **Alaxpacha**. The belief in God and the other elements of the Christian **Alaxpacha** is not a matter of faith as such but, rather, an acceptance of a political fact. Past discussions of Andean syncretism have sought to show that the result of 500 years of Spanish domination is a coherent amalgam of two different belief systems (van den Berg 1990; Abercrombie 1987) or that Andean peoples are in a greater or lesser degree untouched by Christian beliefs.

The period of the **chullpas** (**ch'amakpacha**) is the time when the world is in darkness (**ch'amaka**). Bertonio's Aymara dictionary of 1612 defines **cchamaca pacha** as "a very ancient time when there was no sun, according to the Indians, nor many other things that now exist"<sup>31</sup>. Bouysse-Cassagne asserts that the contemporary myths surrounding the **chullpas** correspond to the myth of **purumpacha** recorded just after the Spanish arrived (1987:180). The chronologicalists refer to the lack of light in the **purumpacha** and general political confusion. Bouysse-Cassagne outlines the various aspects of **puruma** and notes its association both with the wild and the **achachilas**, ancestors, as well as darkness (*ibid*:190).

This period of **ch'amakapacha** is followed by the time of light and the Incas:

...Inca Kapac, Mama Okllo - in those days they only worshipped the sun. It was not their custom to worship God the Father. Then when the Spanish came, another

..Inka Kapac, Mama Ukllu intuns ukax aturatanaw sulaminti intiru. Janiwa Tius awkirux aturarakiritaynatix intunsis kunapachatixa aka ispañulanakax mantanxixä

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<sup>31</sup>Cchamaca pacha: Tiempo antiquissimo, quando no auia sol, segun imaginauan los indios, ni muchas cosas de las que ay agora.

people from another country entered the land of Bolivia.

Then from that time appeared the Bible.

Irkulyanu divides the three periods in terms of darkness, light and the bible. The advent of the sun, the Inca's maximal deity, would seem to herald the coming of the Incas. The time of darkness (**ch'amakpacha**) is consonant with concepts of **Manqhapacha** and the past. This time of darkness is the time when the pre-Incaic spirits were dominant. Darkness is important in terms of ancestral power as we have seen. In terms of history the **ch'amakpacha** could be seen to correspond to the period of Aymara kingdoms before the coming of the Inca Empire and the cult of the sun.

Irkulyanu, in recounting this distant history, collapsed Aymara and Inca identity by identifying with the Incas when the Spaniards invaded. He curiously refers to the coming of the Spaniards as **Yankipacha**, the time of the Yankees. So, whilst collapsing Aymaras and Incas together as indigenous peoples 'who know how to keep the way', the Spaniards are grouped together with other foreigners who are thought to seek to dominate contemporary Bolivia.

This time of the Yankees is the time when Christopher Columbus entered then they possessed the land of Bolivia, Qullasuyu. Then those people who had gold and silver were like us, our brothers, Indian peasants. These others were very rich. Then before, they knew how to hide the gold and silver. In the same way they knew how to guard where their paths were; where they walked/lived; where they rested. This is how they kept and guarded.

was jaqinakax wasa paisat manjix aka Wuliw uraquruxa.

Intunsis uka timputwa wiwlia uñstjarakix.

Aka timpu de Yanki uka pachax mantankatayna timpu de Cristobal Colon intunsis ukawa tuyñuskatayna aka Wuliwya Qullasuyu uraqis intunsis jay ukataw ukaxa qurini qullqini aka jiwas kipka jilatanakaxa kampisinus indius jay ukanaxa wali yaqhipanix qamiri intunsi ukanaxa mayraxa imiritayna quillqi quris. Ukham imiripxitayna kawkharutix thakipax kawki sarnaqawix kawkharatix qarxchi. Intuns ukharux imant'awayxitayna.

He tells us first how Christopher Columbus took possession (**tuyñuskatayna** - made himself the owner; cf. Sp. *dueño*, owner) of Bolivia Qullasuyu. Qullasuyu is the term given by the Incas to refer to the mountain kingdom of the Aymaras in what is now

Bolivia. The Incas "were Indians just like us" he continues, and then shows how they were able to hide and keep not only their gold, but their paths and resting places. It may, at first glance, seem curious, that they should guard their paths and where they walked (*imiripxitayna...kawki sarnaqawix*). As we have seen, the importance of walking in the space of the ancestors is fundamental to Pocabayenos.

In recounting this history, Irkulyanu is in fact making a comment on the present-day situation of his people. The Aymaras are under threat from international capitalism (the Yankees) and they must be careful to keep their ways and traditions and not lose their wealth, cultural as much as economic. This parallelism in history is typical of the Aymara perception of time in which the past is not simply relevant to the present but continues to exist albeit on a different plane.<sup>32</sup> This conception of history as telescoping past and present is similar to a Polynesian conception of history as outlined by Sahlins: "If the present reproduces the past it is because the denizens of the world are instances of the same kinds that came before" (Sahlins 1985:59).

The Aymara situation goes beyond the "collapse of time and happening" for the moral content of the past co-exists with the present in its **Manqhapacha** sphere. Anthropological studies of time have typically stressed the cyclical nature of time in non-Western societies. This ahistoricity is clearly outlined by Eliade who analyses ritual and ceremony as "[suspending] the flow of profane time, of duration, and project[ing] the celebrant into mythical time, *in illo tempore*" (1954:76). This view would seem to depend on a distinction between profane and mythical time which is by no means clear in this instance. Although it is indeed the case that Pocabayenos do not record time's irreversibility, it is hardly the case that, as 'primitive man', they "live in a continual present" (*ibid*:86). In one sense, Aymaras can be seen to live in a continual past as we would define it.

Eliade's formulation depends on a discrete conception of past and present and profane and mythical time. Moreover, as Salomon (1982:11) has argued, to see Andean time as simply cyclical, the past happening over and over again today, begs the question as to why Andeans bother to think about the past at all. He argues that it "may be possible to understand Andean action as the attempt to create patterned time, an icon carved from the intractable substance of human conflict" (*ibid*.).

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<sup>32</sup> Cf. Allen 1988:102 for another example of telescoping in mythic history and where historical parallels give meaning to each other.

This approach, however, also neglects the immanence of the past, that the past and the present are viewed (literally) as proceeding together on the same conceptual plane. Although the distinction is made, the divorce is not complete which is why events of the past are intimately concatenated with the present. On a ritual level, the spirit of the past residing in the **Manqhapacha** is as immanent as the spirit of the present. Time is neither conceived as purely cyclical nor as purely linear, nor even is it seen as a sequence of oscillations between polar opposites (*cf.* Leach 1966:126): it is seen simultaneously as linear, that is, historical, and immanent.

The issues of the representation of the mythic past has been discussed by Harris, Bouysse-Cassagne and Platt chiefly with reference to the southern Bolivian province of Norte de Potosí<sup>33</sup>. Although these authors recognise that the past is perceived with immediacy, the implications of this have not been fully drawn out. Since Malinowski anthropologists have been aware of how mythic past is often a discourse about the present. Frequently, mythic history has been seen as 'charter myths' legitimising the position and status of the ruling elite. Pocabayeno mythic history is not a charter myth, it does not attempt to justify the present in terms of the past but, rather, make the present intelligible in terms of the past. In this case ethnic relations as they occur today are cast in the model of past relations of similar and related peoples.

Such a discourse as described above is then not simply a representation of things gone by, it is also a discourse on the present. This is a present conceived in the past, informed by the past and illustrated by the past. The past is 'alive' as it were and continually impacting on the present.<sup>34</sup> We can now move on to a discussion of the relationship between **Alaxpacha** and **Manqhapacha** and how the nature of this relationship is rooted in an understanding of inter-ethnic relations of today as well as events of the past. For "what a linear perception of time condemns as 'turning back the clock of history' is expressed by the Andean concept of **nayrapacha** [lit: the past], a past capable of redeeming the future, of turning the tables" (Rivera Cusicanqui 1993:21).

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<sup>33</sup> Bouysse-Cassagne (1987); Bouysse-Cassagne and Harris (1987); Platt (1987); Harris (1989, 1987).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Dillon & Abercrombie (1988:59): "...the past, like the future, is nearby, immanent in the visible world and accessible via ritual practice, with the potential to break into daily life at any moment or place."

## Pachakuti: the Antinomy of the Pachas

To understand completely the relationship between the two **pachas** we must first understand the term **pachakuti**. 'Kuti' commonly means 'turn' and **pachakuti** can be translated as the 'turn of pacha'. In the context of cosmology, **kuti** takes on the meaning of involution of opposites. Bouysse-Cassagne & Harris use Berthonio to outline this use of the word **kuti** (see also Harris 1987, 1988).

During the solstice (vilcacuti 'turn of the sun'), which divides the year in two, the solar cycle inverts itself; a sun which increases daily between July and December imposes itself to waning sun of January to June. It is said that the sun completes a revolution during the solstice. As if "to turn itself inside" (cutintatha) or "untwist the twisted" (cutiquipaata).

(Berthonio, ll, 61)

...what can also be totally overturned is the world, an entire era, a pacha. This is what is called **pachakuti**.

When the Andean chroniclers refer to a **pachakuti** they always evoke a world that is backwards, the turn of the world. At the death of an Inca, a **pachakuti** is produced. When the Spanish arrive in the Andes another **pachakuti** is produced. In each of these cases an epoch, a temporal cycle is finished.

(Bouysse-Cassagne & Harris 1987:32)

The idea of **pachakuti** is quite different to other aspects of Andean dualism: the mediation and synthesis is frustrated and incomplete.<sup>35</sup> This mediation between **Alaxpacha** and **Manqhapacha** occurs at the level of humans - the **Akapacha**. What will sooner or later happen is a revolution and not a synthesis - a **pachakuti**. This is how I believe one must see the **Alaxpacha**: it is the result of the **pachakuti** which brought the Spaniards to power and must be accepted for all its historical and temporal force. This mode of understanding history puts the conquest of Andean deities in a particular perspective such that it "creates a way of speaking which, in principle, recognises the validity of former orders in their own terms, and their etiological relevance to the current

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<sup>35</sup> The makers of the Huarochirí manuscript shared this cataclysmic view of history, and, argues Salomon (1982:31), "who espoused a drastically catastrophic notion of the nature of change spurned the idea of a union of opposites or a parallel sacred history shared by Old and New worlds."

change of ages, but which nevertheless refers back to them by words of current, not preterite significance (Salomon 1982:30)". Pocabayenos accept the power of God, but also see its contingent nature; the power of the **Manqhapacha** is, however, what sustains them.

One informant told me why he did not want to marry in the church or have his children baptised:

These are not our customs. The priest wants everyone who marries to follow a course. There he teaches us things which are against our customs. But we have to do these things because without being married or baptised people look down upon us. It is always like that: we always have to do things that the church and government say because they are strong. But it will not always be like that. If we stay to our customs (**sarnaqawi**) there will be a **pachakuti** and then they will have to follow our customs and our beliefs. We will not have to believe in God any more.

The idea that one may "have to believe in God" is quite remarkable in terms of western ideas of faith and religion. In the Pocabayeno context it makes perfect sense: a belief in God is an acceptance of God's temporal power but does not necessarily imply that this power is benevolent or desirable.

The people of Turco share a similar understanding of God and his relation to the dominant culture:

The dominance of the Inca was replaced through the dominance of the 'Christian' God of the saints and Jesus Christ. The whites clearly have the upper hand under the ascendancy of 'their' God: "they have the power to do miracles". Recent technological developments are clear signs of the definite breakthrough of the God of the whites.

Pauwels 1983:354

The millenarian Katarista movement can also be seen in these terms. The Katarista movement is founded on a belief that Tupaq Katari, the leader of an eighteenth century Indian rebellion, will return and overturn the temporal order and restore the world to an indigenist and pre-Hispanic order; that is, he will return to effect a **pachakuti**. Kuti can also quite simply mean 'return' and in this case the return of Tupac Katari. All over the northern **altiplano** one can see graffiti proclaiming that he still lives and will return in

a language not dissimilar to that of the evangelical Christians proclaiming that Jesus lives and announcing the second coming. There is also graffiti announcing the imminence of the **pachakuti**. For the people of Pocabaya, whatever it may have meant to them in the past, **pachakuti** means a violent indigenist revolution possibly including the return of Tupac Katari, the overthrow of the State, and the Hispanic order and the Church (cf. Rivera Cusicanqui 1993). Pocabayenos were not all consistent when I asked what would happen if a **pachakuti** were to occur. Irkulyanu saw the return of Tupac Katari, the rise of the Indian masses and the expulsion of 'Yankees' from Bolivia. Ustakyu wondered if the **chullpas** would rise up. Idmundu suggested there would be communism, "there will not be rich and poor but everyone will be the same" and Tiudusyu the **yatiri**, "everything will reverse (*maysaxaña*)."<sup>1</sup> All however agreed that Indians would be in a position of power after the **pachakuti**.

Both evangelical Christianity and Katarismo are prevalent in that area of **altiplano** around La Paz and both offer an entirely different way of dealing with the Aymara's existential problems: the former rejects all tradition and looks forward to a Christian revolution through which all pagans will be vanquished; the latter looks forward to a **pachakuti** where the forces of tradition and unmediated Aymara identity will finally prevail. The **katarista** political party is significant in that it is founded on a synthesis of class and ethnic identity where previously Aymara peasants had been coöpted into other political groupings as members of the peasant class (Albó 1987). The coherent identity of an Aymara nation is a relatively novel one and has partly been produced by **katarismo** itself (cf. *ibid.*).

The cosmic order of the **pachas** illustrates how the Aymaras have to deal with the Hispanic order of things. Their culture is clearly and unavoidably dominated by a more powerful historical force. Where the **pachas** meet, at the **Akapacha**, there is, however no dialectic, no fusion, no point of mediation (**taypi**), as occurs normally when two opposites meet. Here the dialectical rules of Andean dualism break down. There is no **tinku**, no meeting of opposites to create a violent and productive union; there is no union of man and woman to create a single **chachawarmi** (couple); no union of higher and lower to exchange resources and thus contribute to the reproduction of both parts.

Under the rules of **pacha** there is only a **kuti**, an involution. Since **Alaxpacha** and **Manqhapacha** never really meet, they can only change places in a violent **pachakuti**, a turn of **pachas**. The implications of this in cultural terms are also evident to some

Aymaras. The modern Aymara is thus faced with a difficult choice. S/he can either reject the values of the **Manqhapacha** and become an evangelical Christian embracing the values of the social elite - to use the phrase of Ströbele-Gregor, become "white-skinned Indians"; or accept the uneasy position of popular Catholicism and national metropolitan culture which concedes a little to the presiding historical forces but yet retains an Indian and autochthonous (literally) identity. The dissonance between the process of **pachakuti** and the normal mediation and synthesis of other categories as an example of a case where the symbolic is the pragmatic (Sahlins 1985:ix) and accurately expresses the relationship between the cultures represented in cosmology. The fact that it is held to be that there can be no maintained mediation between the **Alaxpacha** and the **Manqhapacha**, that there can be no sustained equilibrium, shows that there is a basic antinomy between traditional Aymara values and the imposed and temporally more powerful values of church and state. This basic incompatibility is keenly felt on a personal level as well as being illustrated cosmologically.

The dissonance of the **pachakuti** with the reciprocity that typifies relationships in the Andes can be attributed to the reinterpretation of mythic reality in the light of experience. It may very well have been the case in the past that the **pachas** of above and below were productively synthesised in the **Akapacha** between them. The advent of the constituents of the present **Alaxpacha**, however, ruptured these relationships of reciprocity with the ruling powers, human or divine (cf. Wachtel 1977). In such a situation whereby an entire political and religious structure was vanquished, the previous categories could only be reinterpreted. Such events, as Sahlins tells us are interpreted within the parameters of existing concepts but can, in turn, change them: "...the use of conventional concepts in empirical contexts subjects the cultural meanings to practical evaluations" (*op. cit*) and the traditional categories are transformed.

The absence of any reciprocity or exchange or synthesis in this formulation serves to cogently illustrate and underline the difference between conqueror and conquered and is equally an emblem for the relationship between the two. The logical implication is that the only solution, apart from assimilation, is a **pachakuti**, a revolution.

# Conclusion

Any comprehension of history as meaning must recognise the distinctive role of the sign in action, as opposed to its position in structure. Action, we say is intentional: guided by the purposes of the acting subject, his or her social living in the world. Engaged thus in life projects, the sign by which people act are brought into referential relation to the object of their actions, thus giving particular contextual meanings to the conceptual values. All such inflections of meaning depend on the actor's experience of the sign as an interest: its place in an oriented scheme of means and ends.

Sahlins 1981:68

History must not be considered to be simply a discourse about the past: it is intimately about the present, an understanding that is quite clear to Aymaras. In their elaborations of cosmological spheres such as **Alaxpacha** and **Manqhapacha** that represent the dichotomy of indigenous culture and Western/Hispanic culture, Pocabayenos are articulating a theory of cultural difference. They are also including alien cultural phenomena into a coherent system.<sup>36</sup> This encompassment is simultaneously conservative and innovative. It is conservative because there is an implicit attempt, whilst recognising their power, to relegate these foreign values to another world. It is innovative because the basic rules of relationships in the Andes, reciprocity, exchange, mediation, are broken and are broken in the belief that one world can only violently replace the other in the **pachakuti**. The belief in the **pachakuti** in itself is an articulation of the fundamental incompatibility of the two cultures, the two *Weltanschauungen*. With this understanding we are better equipped to examine two interesting and growing social phenomena in contemporary Bolivia: **katarismo** and Evangelical Protestantism.

Evangelical Christianity in Bolivia, unlike traditional Catholicism, is a total rejection of native culture. It is the acceptance of the values of the upper part of the cosmos as described to me in Pocabaya. Any beliefs in mountain and earth spirits, so central to Aymara religion, are unequivocally rejected as are all traditional feasts. There is a total interdiction on the consumption of alcohol which is also central to Aymara (and indeed Catholic) conceptions of communion with the supernatural. Evangelical

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<sup>36</sup> See Platt (1992) for an example of how the Macha of the southern highlands have, in a comparable manner, included writing and documentation and given it meaning within their own cultural system.

Christianity is also seen as being quintessentially Western, partly because the first missionaries all came from the United States and its close associations with that country.

In rejecting Aymara culture in this way, Aymaras are also rejecting the national Catholic dominant culture. I suggest that evangelical Christianity is partly an articulation, not of defeat in the face of the cultural superiority of the dominant classes, but of a desire to gain cultural capital and status even higher than that of the dominant class :

... they do not simply seek an adaption to the way of life of the white middle class, since the members of the middle class themselves recognise that they are but a poor copy of the original 'White Civilisation'. [The Aymaras] seek their identity in that very same 'White Civilisation', as the adventists promise them and as they incarnate in themselves.

Ströbele-Gregor 1988:189

The people of Turco, a small expanding and ambitious town of the altiplano, both implicitly and explicitly recognise the incompatibility between the customs of old which were richer, more powerful and efficacious with regards to rain and fertility than those of today, and a desire for 'progress'. This is expressed in a nostalgia for the past and a feeling that "we are finally becoming civilised," (Pauwels 1983:363). Turco is exactly the kind of town in which one would expect to find the tension between what is represented by old, autochthonous ways and modernism most strong. In fact, although Pauwels makes no mention of indigenist views as well articulated as **katarismo**, he does say there is much Protestant success in Turco and implies that part of the attraction of Protestantism is its uncompromising attitude to 'heathenism'. Those who remain Catholic are frequently described as 'underdeveloped' by Protestants who clearly see themselves on the side of modernity and civilisation (Pauwels 1983:312 and *passim*).

**Katarismo** in my view addresses the same problem from an entirely different angle. **Katarismo** emphasises the millenarian return of Tupac Katari, an Indian leader who led a revolt against the colonial powers in the 1780s. Although **katarismo** is a multifarious and inchoate movement, it taps into sentiments that stress a return to 'traditional' Aymara religion, a relationship with the pre-Incaic and putatively Aymara civilisation of Tiwanaku, and the rejection of Western culture as oppressive and contrary to the basic tenets of the Aymara way of life. The political aim of this movement is the empowerment of Aymara groups on their own terms and eventually political power on

a national scale. "Katarismo is the recuperation of 'long memory' obscured by the short memory of the Agrarian Reform" (Rivera Cusicanqui 1984:163). This long memory has the very opposite effect and is logically directly opposed to evangelical Protestantism, which is explicitly a rejection of the autochthonous past.

Rivera identifies two messianic elements as the nucleus of the **katarista** ideology, "that are crystallised in the cultural-political dimension of the movement":

1. **Katarismo** is a synthesis between a perfect ethical order, manifested in the Inca moral code (*ama sua, ama llula, ama q'ella*) and the anti-colonial struggle that acts to restore it. Here the central point is the perception of the continuation of the colonial situation that justifies the watchwords (*consignas*) or re-establishment of the pre-Hispanic order.

2. **Katarismo** is consciousness of the return of the hero, multiplied by thousands "Nayawa jiwtxa nayjarusti waranga warnqaranakawa kutanipxa." (from the last words, according to oral tradition, of Tupac Katari before being executed by the Spanish): I die, but I shall return tomorrow multiplied ten thousand-fold. The central idea here is the perception of the political importance of numbers: the notion of the national ethnic majority, which is associated with the notion of 'awakening the sleeping giant.'

(Rivera 1983:163-4)

The 're-establishment of the pre-Hispanic order' and the focus on ethnic identity are clearly antithetical to the central ideas of contemporary evangelical Protestantism in Bolivia, yet both phenomena have strong parallels: they both seek to subvert the dominant national culture as it is presently constituted and endeavour to accord people pride and respect in themselves. The Catholic Church and the Bolivian State are closely associated in the minds of many Bolivians (Pauwels 1983:316) and Protestantism can therefore also become a focus of opposition to the dominant culture behind the state. They are, I argue, responses to the recognition that indigenous culture and Western Christian culture are fundamentally opposed and this opposition is recognised in the belief that the only relation between **Alaxpacha** and **Manqhapacha** is an uncompromising **pachakuti**. It is not surprising then that both **katarismo** and evangelical Protestantism are both most prevalent in areas of greatest contact with the metropolitan culture.

**Katarismo** and Protestantism are important issues in contemporary Bolivia, yet they have not received extensive professional anthropological or sociological enquiry. When they have been seriously investigated (eg. Hurtado 1986; Ströbele-Gregor 1988;

Albó 1987; Rivera Cusicanqui 1983, 1984, 1993), they have not been analysed as poles of the same discourse and an understanding of the relationship between the two has not been attempted. As a result, a clear understanding of the motives of people who join these groups and the fact that they co-exist in the same geographical area has eluded the few investigators who have addressed these two phenomena. Further investigation is necessary with this relationship in mind before we can arrive at a fuller understanding of **katarismo** and evangelical Protestantism in contemporary Bolivia.

In Pocabaya there is little support for **katarismo** or evangelical Protestantism although there is an awareness of both: there are many Protestants in Sorata as well as in the nearby village of Ch'exe and Pocabayenos hear about **katarismo** through the radio and when they travel to the **altiplano**. Pocabayenos have been hostile to Protestants, in the past they forced two Protestant families to leave. There is one Pocabayeno who is a self-confessed pagan and **katarista** who believes that the plight of Aymaras today is due to the fact that they have become lax with their traditions and beliefs; he also looks forward to the return of Tupac Katari. Nevertheless, these extreme positions are not represented in Pocabaya in significant numbers.

That Pocabayenos have not yet turned to these movements is perhaps due to their geographic and social isolation. Free from the attentions of bureaucrats, police and priests they have been able to resist to a large extent the intrusion of such representatives from the outside world into their village. Unlike many villages in the **altiplano**, moreover, Pocabaya subsistence economy still functions and provides most of the needs of the community. The need for cash, however, is ever-increasing and, apart from doll-making which allows a number of families to earn money without leaving the village, it means men leaving the village for longer and longer periods. Unless the political and economic structure of Bolivia radically changes, Pocabayenos will be confronted more and more with a conflict of values and will find themselves having to choose between two very different cultures, impelled perhaps towards either **katarismo** or evangelical Protestantism.

At the very centre of the difference between the culture and values of small, rural Aymara communities and the national culture and economy are relations of reciprocity and the common identity of a people sharing land inherited from and sustained by their ancestors. The Aymara peasant economy, described by Hahn as the '*indígena* (or indigenous) mode of production' is based upon intra-group coöperation (or reciprocity) in the use of labour, and in the distribution of surplus through fiestas (Hahn 1992:97).

These non-capitalist social relations are driven and perpetuated by religious beliefs and the sacred consideration of the land which means that Indians are not likely to sell it or put it up as collateral to obtain more land, better seeds, or equipment (*ibid*). The specifically non- or anti-market character of reciprocity is furthermore elaborated by Wachtel (1977) in the context of the 'pre-contact' versus the 'post-contact' Andean economy and by Taussig (1980) in the context of traditional peasant agriculture versus modern capitalist mining.

For the people of Pocabaya economy, kinship and religion are fused and mutually defining with reciprocity and coöperation at the very root of the relationship between the three. The fundamental coherence of these relationships accounts perhaps for the survival and even development of Andean and Aymara culture in the face of almost five centuries of cultural domination.

We have seen in chapters 2 and 3 how Pocabayenos closely identify themselves with each other, how personal identity and group identity frequently fuse. Their wariness of outsiders does not appear to be diminishing and, in fact, there are indications that the community is progressively closing in on itself with increasing endogamy and fewer traditional links with other communities. There are, however, stresses and strains with this communalism which, paradoxically, come most frequently to the fore during those very occasions when the communal identity should most be stressed: fiestas, funerals etc. Nor is the community able to shut off the outside world, even if it wanted to. In chapter 4 we saw how different ideas of gender and power have entered into the community as the ability and power to operate becomes all the more important. The ability to express oneself in Spanish and thus demonstrate a facility with the ideological apparatus of the dominant culture is particularly salient. It is not however so that Pocabayenos passively succumb to these alternatives produced by the powerfully dominant metropolitan culture; ideas are included and reinterpreted within existing categories to give meaning and indeed the potential for argument and discussion. Fluency in the Spanish language itself, an unequivocal emblem of the metropolitan culture, is not always and in every context recognised as a positive attribute. The central position language has in defining humanity means that the ability to speak Spanish has a central role in the reappraisal of traditional categories and values. Yet, as we have seen, using the same schema and applying a slightly different logic, people can arrive at entirely contradictory positions with respect to what Spanish means or should mean within the community.

External values meet a long and coherent system of values and are rarely, it seems, adopted without close examination, debate and extensive modification. On a much larger level the understanding of history and the religion of the conquering Spanish operates in a similar way. Here again, the violent arrival of the Spanish is interpreted according to indigenous structures. The overthrow of the Incas and the subsequent domination of Andean peoples is expressed in terms of *pachakuti* and the relationship of cosmological spheres. The power of Hispanic culture reaches its apotheosis in the form of the Christian God whose appeasement and acknowledgement is necessary for the reproduction of life albeit in a negative rather than positive way.

By articulating the advent of the Spanish within an Andean mythic explanatory scheme, Andean society was able to contain the impact of European invasion without disintegrating entirely under the strain (*cf.* Platt 1992). Moreover, the advent of the Spanish and the supernatural powers of their tutelary deities is seen as historically contingent.

The historical perspective is intimately related to the contemporary situation in Bolivia. Pocabayenos share an identity with **chullpas** and Incas as contemporary **mestizos** and whites share an identity with the Spaniards of the Conquest. Indigenous identity is rooted in a relation with the beings of the **Manqhapacha** which include among their number **chullpas**, Incas and the ancestors of Pocabaya. Pocabayenos relate with the **Manqhapacha** as a community as well as individuals and as households and these relations are firmly based on ideas of reciprocity. Life itself, is seen as a gift from the chthonic powers; a gift which must be regularly repaid with human analogues such as sheep or llamas and, sooner or later, human life. The community and moral human beings are defined by reciprocal relations with each other and form a tight moral community with the denizens of the **Manqhapacha**. In sharp contrast, relations with people beyond the moral community are characterised by exploitation, asymmetry and negative reciprocity.

Excluded from the moral exchange of true humans and the productive powers of the earth are the whites and **mestizos**. They steal the fat of Indians' to run their machines and to offer in their religious and healing rituals. This misappropriation of the source of life which, as I argue in chapter 3 is a product of the **Manqhapacha** simultaneously explains the power and domination of the **mestizos** and whites whilst providing a powerful image of cultural oppression.

Communion with the Christian God is similarly characterised by negative reciprocity in the belief that God's only action upon human existence is to punish (see chapter 5). Whereas the chthonic powers may be ambivalent and inconsistent if not hostile to human fate on occasions, the Christian God is perfectly consistent in his actions upon human lives: if he acts at all it is to give expression to his undying wrath.

Reciprocity is at the root of social and supernatural relations in Pocabaya and in the Andes as a whole. Cultural difference is expressed by the lack of reciprocity and as such native cultural values are applied to a system of relations which defies the norms of Andean values. On a larger scale, the religion of the Hispanic Christian is inserted into an native cosmology, a traditionally dualistic and complementary model whilst the antinomy is articulated in terms of rules broken.

The nature of the differences between Christianity and autochthonous religion must be understood before we can properly comprehend the relationship between the two. An important element is the fact that Christian ritual from an Andean perspective chiefly consists of indexical rather than symbolic meaning (*cf.* Tambiah 1979) and can thus not be considered in the same way as autochthonous ritual.

As we have seen in Chapter 5, to take formal Christian symbolism at face value may obscure the very purposes of ritual activity, the ends to which they are enacted. What from an external viewpoint may be a Christian celebration may be something else entirely for the participants as was illustrated with the example of the fiesta of San Pedro. Christianity in the Andes must be understood in the context of the historical and social background in which it exists.

**Alaxpacha** and **Manqhapacha**, the upper world and the lower, are both are necessary for the reproduction of human life, a formulation that recognises political fact. Nevertheless the relation between the two departs from standard Andean models in the lack of union or mediation between them. History and cosmology are once again intimately related for the contingent nature of the power of the Spanish and their gods, that is, that they will be replaced by another *pachakuti*, means that although the victory of Hispanic culture is recognised, it is not accepted as being total.

The uneasy complementarity between **Alaxpacha** and **Manqhapacha** is echoed in other aspects of contemporary Bolivia. Villages such as Pocabaya provide a reserve of labour to be deployed in the gold mines and the larger agricultural sectors. Wages can be kept very low because Indians do not depend on these jobs for their entire livelihood.

There is thus a curious complementarity between the outside capitalist world based on short-term market exchange and the non-capitalist economy based on long-term exchange and reciprocity. Pocabaya is in fact dependent on the capitalist sector to provide it with sufficient cash to meet their needs as the land and its products are no longer sufficient. This complementarity is echoed in other areas too, namely the relationship between Catholicism and Andean religion. Catholic baptism, for example, provides Pocabayenos with a means of obtaining an identity in the state of Bolivia (through identity cards) but it also provides them with protection from the wrath of God, and the powers that be. Catholicism thus provides the space for continuing practice of Andean religion; a space which Protestantism denies. Whereas the spheres of **Alaxpacha** and **Manqhapacha** may be complementary in this respect the relations of people with the two is profoundly different. In general relations beyond the community and the denizens of the **Manqhapacha** are characterised by asymmetry, negative reciprocity and hostility.

One must be careful, however, not to over-emphasise the hostility Pocabayenos have towards the dominant culture that surrounds them. Although it is indeed the case that the community draws in on itself in the face of cultural hostility, it is equally the case that many Pocabayenos leave and make their way in modern Bolivia, returning only for the major fiestas. Returned migrants arrive laden with goods and new clothes and illustrate the abundance of goods that is available beyond the community.

Some Pocabayenos such as Jirman are very clear about the advantages and disadvantages of the two worlds. He likes the freedom, the mountains, and the flexibility of life in Pocabaya and believes (probably correctly) that he would be poorer living in La Paz. Others such as Rimijiu, with whom I began this thesis, see advantages and disadvantages but find they are discontented living either in Sorata or in Pocabaya. These tensions, dilemmas and conflicts will only increase over time as the country and area around Pocabaya develops economically and politically. Only time will tell which path Pocabayenos will choose: an evangelist embrace of American Protestantism, an indigenist revival, or an uneasy road between the two.

## Glossary

All words are Aymara except: Sp. (Spanish) and Qu. (Quechua)

### A

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| achachila  | mountain spirit; ancestral spirit  |
| ahijados   | (Sp.) godchildren  |
| ajayu      | soul   |
| akapacha   | the spatio-temporal matrix inhabited by people; the pacha of here.             |
| akultasiña | to chew coca together  |
| alaxpacha  | the spatio-temporal sphere of above presided over by the Christian deities     |
| alma       | (Sp.) Christian soul   |
| altiplano  | (Sp.) the broad highland plain of the Andes which also contains Lake Titicaca  |
| amuya      | memory; intelligence   |
| Anata      | Carnival; a fiesta celebrating natural fertility.                              |
| anchañchu  | species of malignant tellurian spirits   |
| apachita   | mountain pass; cairn erected to the achachila of the mountain pass             |
| awayu      | woven cloth use for carrying bundles   |
| ayllu      | maximal organisation of the ethnic group (now defunct in the area of Pocabaya) |
| ayni       | reciprocated labour  |

### C

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| cacique    | (Sp.) An indigenous leader in Colonial times.   |
| calvario   | (Sp.) a mound of rocks mounted with a cross where offerings are made to the achachilas. These are modelled on the calvario of the Virgen de Copacabana which is a representation of the stations of the cross on the hill at the pilgrimage site of Copacabana. |
| cargo      | (Sp.) position of authority or sponsorship of a fiesta.   |
| comadrazgo | (Sp.) the institution of godparenthood  |
| comadre    | (Sp.) the father of one's godchild: lit co-father   |

## CH

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| chacha      | man  |
| chachawarmi | couple:lit. man-woman.   |
| cholo       | (Sp.)acculturated Indian   |
| chullpa     | inhabitants of the world before the advent of the sun or God; site of ruins said to be once inhabited by chullpas. |
| chuño       | freeze-dried potatoes  |
| chuyma      | life force   |

## CH'

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| ch'alla    | a libation to the tellurian spirits.   |
| ch'amakani | shaman, the yatiri who communicates with the tellurian forces: lit. he who possesses the forces of darkness. |
| ch'apa     | half of a pair   |
| ch'uspa    | coca pouch   |

## E

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| encomendero | (Sp.) The owner of an encomienda.  |
| encomienda  | (Sp.) A land grant by the Spanish Crown which granted the beneficiary not only the lands of Indians but the right to their labour as well. |
| evangelico  | (Sp.) evangelical Protestant.  |

## H

|           |                            |
|-----------|----------------------------|
| hacendado | (Sp.) owner of an hacienda |
|-----------|----------------------------|

## I

|        |                             |
|--------|-----------------------------|
| imilla | girl                        |
| inkuña | woven cloth for coca leaves |
| Inti   | (Qu.) sun god               |
| inti   | (& Qu.) sun                 |

## J

|      |        |
|------|--------|
| jaqi | person |
|------|--------|

## K

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| kaswira    | maize pancakes used in communal meals (wayq'asi)                                      |
| kataristas | members of the millenarian Tupaq Katari movement                                      |
| kawiltu    | (cf. Sp. cabildo) a structure of cane for welcoming honoured guests to the community. |
| kharisiri  | sucker of blood or bodyfat; 'vampire'   |

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| kunturmamani       | the aspect of the Manqhapacha that is the spirit of the house;<br>lit:condor falcon.                  |
| k'usa              | maize beer ( <i>cf.chicha (Qu.)</i> )   |
| <b>L</b>           |   |
| layka              | practitioner of witchcraft and black magic  |
| <b>M</b>           |   |
| mama               | polite form of address for a woman (married)  |
| manqhapacha        | the spatio-temporal matrix of the tellurian spirits.  |
| mayordomo          | (Sp.) manager of an hacienda.   |
| misa               | an offering of coca, alcohol, powders, herbs, sweets etc. to the achachilas or Pachamama              |
| misa               | (Sp.) mass  |
| mollo              | An ancient pre-Incaic culture   |
| mimuria            | intelligence; the kind of intelligence needed for dealing with the outside world (Sp. memoria=memory) |
| <b>P</b>           |   |
| pacha              | spatio-temporal matrix; totality; earth   |
| pachakuti          | the involution of spatio-temporal matrices Alaxpacha and Manqhapacha                                  |
| pachamama          | tutelage spirit of the earth and source of fertility; earth   |
| padrinazgo         | (Sp.) the institution of godparenthood  |
| padrino            | (Sp.) godfather   |
| parinu             | godfather; sponsor of ritucha, baptism or a wedding (from the Sp.)                                    |
| patrón             | (Sp.) master; hacendado   |
| <b>Q</b>           |   |
| qulliri            | medicine man/woman  |
| <b>Q'</b>          |   |
| q'ara              | (pej.) acculturated Indian; mestizo; white person: lit: bare skinned; naked                           |
| <b>R</b>           |   |
| ritucha            | first hair-cutting  |
| riwutu             | the skull used by the ch'amakani for communication with the achachilas                                |
| <b>S</b>           |   |
| sarnaqaña          | to walk; to walk the moral landscape of the achachilas; life.   |
| saxra              | species of malignant tellurian spirits  |
| Secretario General | (Sp.) The Secretary General, i.e. the elected leader, of the  |

community. The title comes from the post-Reform sindicalist model of peasant organisation.

suma jaqi lit: good person

sullu llama foetus

supaya species of malignant tellurian spirits; 'devils'

## T

t'ant'a wawa bread babies baked and sometimes baptised in the feast of Todos Santos.

tata polite form of address for a man (married).

tawaqu adolescent (female); unmarried woman

taypi centre; point or area of synthesis

tinku ritual battle between moieties; confluence of rivers

Tiu tutelary spirit of the mine.

Todos Santos All Saints; the feast of the dead.

trueque (Sp.)barter

Tupaq Katari leader of the 18th century revolt against the Spanish

## TH

thaki the way; path; life.

thalthapiña the massaging of a pregnant woman's abdomen with an awayu

## U

umjasiña to drink communally

uraqi earth, soil.

uñt'ata concubine [m/f]. lit:known person

uswiri midwife

## V

vecindad (Sp.) the white community of a town or village

vecinos (Sp.) members of the vecindad: lit. neighbours.

## W

wak'a sacred rocks and place of offerings to tellurian powers.

wayq'asi communal meal

wawa baby

wayna adolescent (male); unmarried man

wilachaña literally 'to make blood': sacrifice.

wirjina Pachamama (from Sp. Virgen [Virgin])

**Y**

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| yatiri  | village ritual specialist who deals principally with witchcraft and matters of the ajayu: lit. he who knows |
| yuqalla | boy   |
| yuhta   | reactive agent for chewing coca   |
| yungas  | (Qu.) valleys   |

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