

ON THE ROAD TOWARDS EMPOWERMENT: AYLLU-COMMUNITY VALUES
AND PRACTICES IN AN URBAN SETTING. THE CASE OF THE
COMMUNITY OF URBAN AYMARAS OF PAMPAJASI,
LA PAZ, BOLIVIA

by


ELENA CARMEN RAQUEL MONTENEGRO

A THESIS

Presented to the Interdisciplinary Studies Program:
International Studies
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts

June 2008

“On the Road Towards Empowerment: Ayllu-Community Values and Practices in an Urban Setting. The Case of the Community of Urban Aymaras of Pampajasi, La Paz, Bolivia,” a thesis prepared by Elena Carmen Raquel Montenegro in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program: International Studies. This thesis has been approved and accepted by:



Carlos Aguirre, Chair of the Examining Committee

5/20/08

Date

Committee in Charge: Carlos Aguirre, Chair
Lynn Stephen
Brian Klopotek

Accepted by:



Dean of the Graduate School

© 2008 Elena Carmen Raquel Montenegro

An Abstract of the Thesis of

Elena Carmen Raquel Montenegro for the degree of Master of Arts
in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program: International Studies
to be taken June 2008

Title: ON THE ROAD TOWARDS EMPOWERMENT: AYLLU-COMMUNITY
VALUES AND PRACTICES IN AN URBAN SETTING. THE CASE OF THE
COMMUNITY OF URBAN AYMARAS OF PAMPAJASI, LA PAZ, BOLIVIA

Approved: _____
Carlos Aguirre

Using historical and theoretical insights, this thesis explores how the urban grassroots organization Community of Urban Aymaras of Pampajasi (CAUP) has used elements of the rural ayllu-community to gain agency towards the empowerment of its members and explores the roles played by activism and strategic support.

The research for this thesis took place in Pampajasi, a neighborhood of La Paz, between 2006 and 2007. It included participating observation, interviews and focus groups with the first and second generation migrants to La Paz that constitute most of the membership of the CAUP, as well as interviews with non-members.

By better understanding how the elements of the ayllu-community are being used to gain empowerment, other grassroots organizations, researchers, activists, policy

makers and development specialists may acquire insights into how traditional culture can be used to construct alternative forms of organization in post-colonial societies.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Elena Carmen Raquel Montenegro

PLACE OF BIRTH: New York City, NY, USA

DATE OF BIRTH: August 7th, 1954

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon

Universidad Mayor de San Andrés

DEGREES AWARDED:

Master of Arts, International Studies, June 2008, University of Oregon

Licenciatura en Antropología, 1998, Universidad Mayor de San Andrés,
La Paz, Bolivia

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Identity and change; urban identities, representation, migration and cultural
transmission within the family; children

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Interpreter, Oregon Social Learning Center, Community Programs, 2005

Interpreter and interviewer, Oregon Social Learning Center, 2001-2004

Census worker in migrant agricultural worker camps. US Government, 2000

Content development director. Children's Museum of La Paz, 1992-1996.

Pre-school teacher. Various schools in La Paz, Bolivia. 1986-1991.

Project Coordinator. Centro de Promoción de la Mujer “Gregoria Apaza”,
San Luis Pampa, El Alto, La Paz, 1983-1986.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank the Community of Urban Aymaras of La Paz for their friendship and ongoing contributions to this research, without which this thesis would not have existed. I hope the bonds we have developed will continue to strengthen through time.

I also thank Javier Mendoza and Mercedes Zerda for their friendship, which has grown in time and aged so well, and who have helped in every way to make this research happen.

I would also like to thank Carlos Aguirre, my advisor and Chair of my thesis committee, for his patience, his excellent and continuing advice, insights and suggestions; Lynn Stephen, member of my committee, for her valuable advice and for the clarity of her vision regarding ethnography and research; and Brian Klopotek, also a member of my committee, for his thoughtful advice and understanding of the issues surrounding the CAUP.

I also need to thank Priscilla Havlis, my good friend, for her encouragement from the inception of this process, almost a year ago, and her unflagging enthusiasm, editing and formatting skills; my partner Jean Stacey, for her emotional and material support throughout, her thought-provoking questions about white privilege in La Paz, and her surgical suggestions for this thesis; my brother Pablo Montenegro for reviewing the thesis drafts, particularly as to the historical and political aspects; and thank our good friends in Eugene who have made our life so rich and enjoyable, before and during the thesis writing. My family in Bolivia has always been supportive of this intellectual venture, so late in life, and that has provided such rich life lessons. I thank my daughters and grandkids for their

help and inspiration, and I specifically thank my mother who encouraged me to pursue a university education despite all the obstacles.

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this thesis to the Community of Urban Aymaras of La Paz for their hard work, their courage, their humor, their commitment. To Javier Chipana, to Don Carlos (Mario) Yujra, to Marisol Surculento, to Angel Apaza, to Lucía Villca, to Samuel Oquendo, to Elizabeth Oquendo, to Francisca Chambilla de Oquendo, to Vicky Orosco, to Roxana Pérez, to Mery Salgado, to Primitiva Laime, to the *awichas*, to the *tías* and *tíos* of Machaq Uta, to the families of Machaq Uta, to the healers. I wish to dedicate it also to Javier Mendoza and Mercedes Zerda, who were always there.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Bolivia: Background Information	2
La Paz: A Majority of Aymara Population	6
Pampajasi: A Neighborhood of the City of La Paz, Past and Present	8
The Community of Urban Aymaras of Pampajasi (CAUP)	11
My First Encounters with the CAUP	16
Research Process	18
Research Questions	18
Argument	18
Relevance	19
Methods and Timeline	20
Changes in the Research Process	21
Interviews	21
Participating Observation	22
Research Authorization, the Ayllu-community Way	25
Photos	27
Language	27
Historical and Theoretical Frameworks	27
Terminology	28
Description of the Content of Each Chapter	29
Endnotes	34
II. AYMARA PEOPLE AND AYLLU-COMMUNITY, PAST AND PRESENT	35
The Importance of History for the Consolidation of Indigenous Identities	35
Origin of the Aymara Peoples	37
Spanish Colonization: Two Nations	39
The Republic and “The Indigenous Problem”	43
The Chaco War and Aftermath: Together In the Trenches	47
1952: The Concept of “The Indian” Disappears and “The Peasant” is Created	50
New Forums and New Political Actors	52
The 1990s: The Indigenous Movements Gain Strength	56
Alternate Discourses in the Making	58
Endnotes	60

Chapter	Page
III. THE CAUP: HOW THEY STARTED, WHO THEY ARE TODAY.....	62
Strategic Supporters Who Accompanied the Process.....	64
Union Style or Community Style?	66
Gender Relations Within the CAUP	69
Timeline: When Different CAUP Programs and Components Were Created	73
The Primary Components of Modern-day CAUP	75
Machaq Uta, the Daycare.....	75
Awicha, the Senior Centers.....	81
Qulla Uta, the Center for Traditional Medicine and Spirituality	84
The CAUP Team.....	85
Multigenerational Activities	88
CAUP Funding.....	89
The CAUP's Acquisition of Legal Status.....	90
Endnotes.....	93
IV. LIVING IN CONDITIONS OF SUBALTERNITY.....	95
Subalternity	95
Being Indigenous in the City	98
Being a Woman in Pampajasi.....	100
Being Young in Pampajasi.....	101
Being Old in Pampajasi	103
Who Decides Who is Indigenous.....	104
Subalternity and Collective Identity	108
Endnotes.....	111
V. THE CAUP AS AN AYLLU-COMMUNITY, AS HABITUS AND AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT	113
General Considerations on Community.....	114
The Ayllu, a Community That Involves Territory, Social Values, and Practices	115
The Ayllu as a Mobilizing Concept.....	117
Is the CAUP a Social Movement?	119
The Rural Ayllu as a Tool to Build an Urban Community.....	121
The CAUP as an Ayllu-community.....	121
The CAUP, a Self-managed Community.....	124
The Ayllu-community Habitus	128
Endnotes.....	132

Chapter	Page
VI. COMMUNITY AND AGENCY	135
Agency: Power and Resistance	136
The Beginning of Community Was the Beginning of Agency	138
Social Tools for Ayllu-community Management	143
General Assemblies	143
Yearly Rotating Leaderships.....	145
Decision Making Through Consensus	150
Conflict Resolution	152
Community Control	155
Transparency, Accountability	157
Generation and Management of Funds	158
Participation in Income Generating Activities for the Group	158
Joint Savings and Control of Funds	160
Values	162
Respect	162
Equality	164
Participation	166
Solidarity	166
Reciprocity	168
Work.....	170
Multigenerational Activities.....	172
Music.....	173
Ritual Activities, the Use of Coca.....	174
Memory - Don't You Dare Forget	176
Benefits	177
Empowerment Through Emotional Support	177
Belonging	178
Dignity	179
Ownership and Pride	180
Well-being.....	181
Acknowledgement.....	183
Agency and Empowerment.....	184
Sustainability.....	188
Stories.....	192
Critiques and Responses	199
Conclusions for this Chapter.....	204
Endnotes.....	205

Chapter	Page
VII. DONORS, VOLUNTEERS, AND SOCIAL COMMUNITY	
PSYCHOLOGISTS: STRATEGIC SUPPORTERS	210
“Activists” and “Strategic Supporters”	210
Foreign Volunteers.....	211
Donors.....	216
Local Support and Volunteers	217
Social Community Psychology, a Form of Strategic Support that Blends Science and Politics	218
Two Social Community Psychologists and a Group That Was Ready to Self- manage	221
Being There.....	223
Letting Be and Answering Questions with Questions	224
Boosting Self-confidence.....	225
Opening Doors	226
Conclusions for this Chapter.....	227
Endnotes.....	229
VIII. REFLECTIONS ON THIS RESEARCH PROCESS	232
What to Include, What to Discard.....	232
On the Non-Neutrality of Research	232
Theoretical Frameworks	233
The Politics of Location.....	234
My Own Habitus.....	236
Framing Research in Cross-cultural Contexts	238
IX. CONCLUSIONS	244
The CAUP, a Community Based on a Rural Habitus.....	245
Agency	247
Strategic Support.....	250
Agency Through Being And Through Doing	252
APPENDICES	256
A. TRANSCRIPTION OF UNEDITED JOURNAL NOTES FROM FOUR AWICHA MEETINGS	257
Meeting No. 1	257
Meeting No. 2	260
Meeting No. 3	264
Meeting No. 4	268

Chapter	Page
B. TRANSCRIPTION OF NOTES TAKEN ABOUT MACHAQ UTA, THE DAYCARE	278
C. TRANSCRIPTION OF NOTES AND PARTS OF INTERVIEWS TAKEN ABOUT QULLA UTA	283
D. DESCRIPTION OF THE 2006 <i>ENTRADA</i> IN PAMPAJASI	288
REFERENCES	297

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. CAUP Membership	14
2. History of the CAUP Groups and Programs	74
3. Groups and Programs of the CAUP Created Since 1997	75
4. Ayllu-community Practices and Values Utilized by the CAUP, and Benefits of These Practices and Values in the City	142

LIST OF MAPS

Map	Page
1. Regions of Bolivia	3
2. Departments of Bolivia	4
3. Aymara Kingdoms	38
4. 16 th Century City of La Paz, Spanish Section Shown in Square Grid	40

LIST OF FIGURES

Figures	Page
1. City of La Paz, View From the Road to Pampajasi, Home of CAUP, 2006.....	6
2. Pampajasi, Home of CAUP, 2006	9
3. Pampajasi, When CAUP First Began, 1980s.....	12
4. Two Cultures Meet in La Paz, 1950s.....	51
5. View of La Paz From Pampajasi, 1980s.....	62
6. Machaq Uta's First Daycare Site, 1980s.....	76
7. Machaq Uta's New Facility, 1990s.....	77
8. One of the Awicha Facilities, the "Green House"	81
9. Sign at the Doorway of Qulla Uta.....	84

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the European conquest and colonization of the territories now known as Bolivia, indigenous peoples have combined strategies of resistance and co-existence in regard to their Spanish and *criollo*¹ hegemonic counterparts. The preservation of a traditional system of organization - which embodies traditional Andean beliefs, values and practices – has helped keep indigenous agency alive in the Bolivian highlands and in recent years has become a powerful symbol and inspiration for indigenous movements and grassroots organizations. This system of organization is called *ayllu-community*; the *ayllu* is the basic sociopolitical unit of Aymara organization.

The grassroots organization Comunidad de Aymaras Urbanos de Pampajasi, CAUP (The Community of Urban Aymara of Pampajasi), has used elements of the rural *ayllu* to organize an urban community in the neighborhood of Pampajasi in La Paz, Bolivia. This primarily women's organization provides health, child and senior care to poor, urban, indigenous Aymara families and for twenty-five years has self-managed without the tutelage of other organizations.

Using historical and theoretical backgrounds as a context, this thesis shows how the CAUP has used some of the values and practices of the Andean *ayllu-community* to create an urban *ayllu-community* in the city and gain agency towards urban Aymara empowerment.

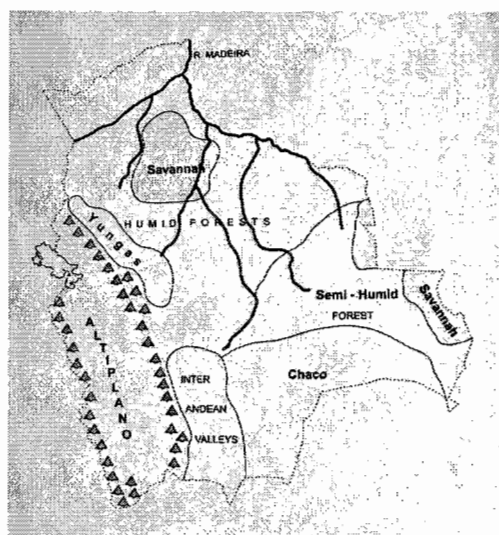
To understand the work that the CAUP has been doing since 1983, it is important to see it within the larger context of the place and time in which it started to develop. The majority of Bolivia's population is indigenous and the city of La Paz and its surroundings have been one of the stages on which the process of colonial domination has most dramatically played out. La Paz is also where indigenous, particularly Aymara, identity-based movements surfaced in the 1960s and where social and ethnic unrest continues to be most frequent.

Twenty-five years ago when the groups that later became CAUP were beginning to coalesce as a community in Pampajasi, their neighborhood was still unpaved, had no services, and was practically inaccessible from the center of town. In recent years Bolivia, La Paz, and Pampajasi have all experienced significant social, economic and political changes and the CAUP ayllu-community has had to adapt to them. A quick overview of Bolivia's geography and economy, as well as a description of the neighborhood of Pampajasi in La Paz will provide the background and setting to describe the CAUP's process.

Bolivia: Background information

Bolivia lies in the heart of South America. It is the fifth largest country in the continent. Bolivia has been landlocked since 1879, when it lost its seacoast to Chile and recovery of this seacoast continues to be a key goal of Bolivian foreign policy, with huge practical and symbolic implications. The two mountainous chains of the Andes descend down the Western flank of the country with an *altiplano* (highland plateau) between them.

This mountainous region accounts for approximately one third of the country's 424,164 sq. miles. The *altiplano* is about 12,000 ft. in altitude and contains the highest navigable lake in the world, Lake Titikaka (Map 1). The administrative capital, La Paz, is also on this high plateau. On the northeastern slopes of the Cordillera Oriental or Eastern Andean range, are narrow subtropical valleys called Yungas and below them are broader,

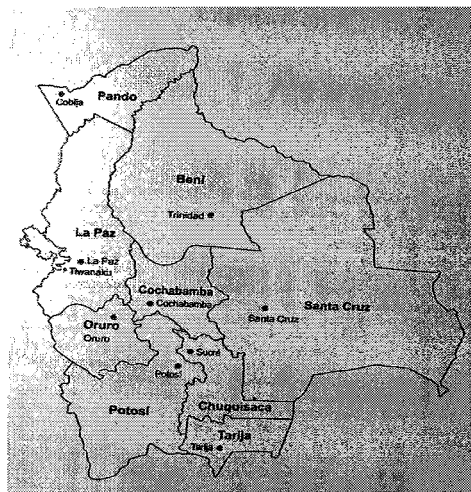


Map 1. Regions of Bolivia (Good, 2006, p. 7).

temperate valleys. At a lower altitude, from the northeast to the southeast, are the lowland Amazonian jungles, the grasslands, and then the dry plains of the Chaco (Crabtree, 2007, p. 164).

The Bolivian Institute of Statistics estimates that the territory of Bolivia, divided into nine Departments (Map 2), has 10,027,643 inhabitants, more than half of whom are under age twenty. According to UNDP statistics, Bolivia is the poorest country in South America with \$2,619 per capita annual income (United Nations Development Program, 2006 Human Development Index Ratings).²

In 1985 Bolivia suffered one of the worst economic and social crises of its history. Tin prices fell in the international market and Bolivia's exports decreased 40% between 1985 and 1986. The country was forced to shift from an economy based on mining to other exports, which relocated the productive centers from the Western highlands to the Eastern lowlands. Inflation and unemployment were rampant. In the 1970s Bolivia had



Map 2. Departments of Bolivia (Good, 12. 2006, p. 19).

acquired multilateral loans from the World Bank, the Inter-American Bank of Development and bilateral loans from several countries. It was complying with IMF recommendations and debt payments at a very high cost to its citizens. Bolivia turned to natural gas and soy as its major exports (Enciclopedia de Bolivia, 2006, p. 311-313).

Problems of economic inequality exacerbate poverty in Bolivia, a country in which being poor and being indigenous are almost synonymous. It is among the countries with the highest inequality levels in South America, almost equal to those of Brazil (Gray Molina, 2005, p. 4) with restricted social mobility and a highly stratified class system. Poverty implies, among other things, discrimination, marginalization and exclusion,

together with exploitation, the expropriation of capacities, and the subjection to conditions imposed by those who are not poor, upon those who are (Zerda, 2005, p. 33).

Bolivia is also the country with the highest percentage of indigenous population in South America³; 62% of the population self-identifies as indigenous (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, INE [National Institute of Statistics of Bolivia] webpage). There are 34 native languages spoken: About 30% of Bolivia's people speak Quechua, 25% Aymara, 30% only Spanish, and the remaining 15% speak other native languages. Despite the creation (in the last fifty years) of laws designed to enhance the rights and services of the poorest and most underrepresented sectors, for the most part the laws and the composition of the State institutions do not reflect the social and ethnic realities of the country's population.

The effects of globalization, poverty, and the lack of local employment have caused internal migration within the country and also migration to countries such as Argentina, Brazil, and in recently increasing numbers to Spain, the U.S., and others. In his 2007 speech in the UN, Bolivian president Evo Morales quoted Human Rights and immigration statistics according to which almost one in four Bolivians is now living and working abroad.

The election of Evo Morales, the first indigenous president of Bolivia, is a sign that the people of Bolivia are working towards the reversal of postcolonial structures of power and that indigenous peoples are attempting to take center stage for the first time in the history of Bolivia.

La Paz: A majority of Aymara population

La Paz is one of the highest capital cities in the world, at about 12,000 feet above sea level (Fig. 1). The city was founded in a wide valley and has spread up the steep

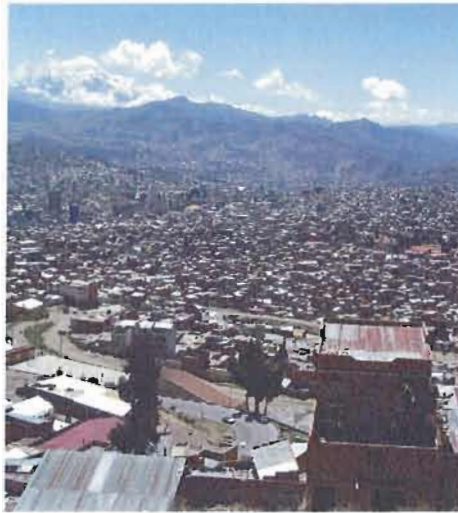


Figure 1. City of La Paz, view from the road to Pampajasi, home of CAUP, 2006 (CAUP Archives).

slopes of the irregular basin in which it lies. Two hundred rivers flow down from the highland plateau and a mass of tin roofs and tall buildings seems to flow from the heights of neighboring city of El Alto towards the lower, warmer South in which the wealthier urban families reside.

The city of La Paz is an important commercial hub and rural Aymara migrations reinforce its decidedly Aymara character. According to the most recent census data for urban La Paz (2001), 612,786 men and woman over 15 years of age in La Paz ascribe as Aymara, while 301,645 do not (INE: La Paz, 2002, p. 50). Many authors and politicians have said that there are two Bolivias (Gray Molina, 2005, p. 10), and also that the city of La Paz is in reality two cities, “two republics” (Albó, 1983; Barragán, 1990; Stephenson,

2002): one Aymara and one non-Aymara, in which the descendents of the Spanish and the descendents of the Aymaras coexist and interact but because of cultural differences, interact from different planes and perceptions of reality, generating misunderstandings and deepening existing ethnic tensions. Because of non-indigenous hegemonies, indigenous peoples live in conditions of deep inequality and exclusion.

Interpreting the census data in which the majority of the population self-ascribes as Aymara in a different way, proponents of *mestizaje* argue that La Paz is mostly *mestiza* (of mixed Spanish and Aymara heritage). However, perspectives of *mestizaje* tend to blur inequalities that are not based only on income and to forget that poverty and indigeneity continue to be tightly interwoven. As Javier Sanjinés writes, “In Bolivia the paradigm of *mestizaje* is nothing but an upper-class *letrado* discourse whose purpose is to justify the continued domination of the mestizo-criollos who assumed power after the Federal Revolution of 1899 [...]. As a homogenized mestizo-criollo version of the Bolivian nation, the construction of the *mestizaje* ideal regulates the social imaginary and erases subalternity” (2005, p. 149). Felipe Quispe, radical Aymara leader, has proposed that if there is to be *mestizaje*, it should be a *mestizaje* “up-side down”, in which the *q'aras* (whites) would be “Indianized” (p. 166).

Although the ideologues of the 1952 Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario, MNR (National Revolutionary Movement), revolution decreed an Agrarian Reform and conceded to the indigenous population full citizenship, the right to vote and rights to formal education, this was a class-based ideology, according to which the indigenous people were not *a people*, but a class, a class of peasants.

In the early 1960s indigenous awareness began to surface again in the city of La Paz. Indigenous movements and parties were founded, and based upon these efforts the *Katarista* movement was born in the early 1970s. In the early 1980s the Taller de Historia Oral Andina, THOA (Workshop of Oral Andean History) was created, all of which brought visibility and increased ethnic and cultural awareness to Aymara people. “We are a people, not only a class”, said Juan Condori Uruchi (Choque & Mamani, 2001, p. 205).

The 1990s began with an event of enormous importance within the history of indigenous movements in Bolivia, the March for Dignity and Territory of the indigenous peoples of the Bolivian Amazon. Representatives from several lowland indigenous groups walked more than 800 kilometers from the Amazonian lowlands to the city of La Paz to reclaim territorial rights, and were greeted there by the Aymara organizations, in a gesture that initiated the reunification of the indigenous movements of East and West, of the Andean highlands and the lowlands.

The current indigenous government of Evo Morales is attempting to establish important reforms towards a form of government and representation that more closely resembles the cultural and ethnic realities of Bolivia today.

Pampajasi: A neighborhood of the city of La Paz, past and present

Pampajasi is one of the “zonas marginales” of the city of La Paz: a neighborhood that is not only on the outskirts of the city but is also considered socio-economically marginal. While the downtown area of La Paz is at the bottom of a wide valley,

Pampajasi is about forty minutes east of downtown by car and situated almost 1000 feet higher in altitude (Fig. 2). It is situated over sheer cliffs that overlook the city, vast valleys, and, in the distance, mountains with snowy peaks.



Figure 2. Pampajasi, home of CAUP, 2006 (CAUP Archives).

Migrant populations started arriving in Pampajasi in the late 1960s, mostly from the rural highland towns of Santiago de Machaca and Jesús de Machaca. In addition to these new migrants, as was the custom among some employers, the municipal police bought inexpensive properties in outlying, largely uninhabited areas such as Pampajasi for their employees to acquire and slowly pay for. Some of these families eventually built houses there which contributed to the growth of Pampajasi. The 1976 census, the closest to the 1960-1980 time period, puts the total population of Pampajasi at 4,190 (INE, 2007). In the 1980s transportation services were unpredictable and sparse.

Because resident families helped the newly arrived migrants find work, the members of specific rural communities tended to work in the same fields. Following that

pattern, those who arrived from the Aroma province worked in jobs associated with transportation (because that is the field in which the first Aroma immigrants found work), and those from the town of Santiago de Ojje, worked as tailors and bakers (Albó, Greaves & Sandoval, 1983). In Pampajasi, the new migrants, mostly men, were placed as dishwashers and waiters, others as guards and construction workers. According to 1976 census data, at that time the percentage of full-time employment was about 25% for the men and less than 6% for the women, but the declared unemployment rate was less than 4% because of self- and under-employment. Jobs were scarce and low-paying so family members had to scramble to find work and then pool their resources.

The 1976 census also reports that 10% of a total of 4190 Pampajasi dwellers were monolingual Aymara speakers and half were speakers of both Aymara and Spanish. The literacy rate in Spanish at this time was about 50%. Most of those who were illiterate were the women and the elderly. In a demographic study for her thesis on Pampajasi (1997), Mercedes Zerda came up with these percentages for the early 1980s: 80% of the men and 60% of the women had had a few years of formal schooling. However about 40% of those women could no longer read and write. Due to the lack of reading materials in Bolivia, it was common that an individual learned how to read and write in school but without practice became an *analfabeto funcional* who could no longer actually read. 78% of the children under 19 were going to school, but for every 100 children in school, only 30 finished high school. There was an average of four children per family and families were living five, six or seven to a room. In that room they ate, slept, received visitors and cooked.

With regard to housing and services, 1976 census data shows that plumbing, sewage systems and electricity were practically non-existent: out of 941 homes, 938 had no plumbing, 920 had no sewage system and 649 no electricity.

Currently, those rates have improved. Declared illiteracy is under 8% and most homes have potable water and sewage systems. However, most families continue to live crowded in one or two rooms, work as *eventuales* (people who do on-demand work), and suffer underemployment (INE, 2007).

The Pampajasi of today is no longer isolated. It is contiguous with many older neighborhoods of La Paz that have crept up the eastern slopes and new neighborhoods have developed around and beyond the heights of Pampajasi. Passenger mini-buses roar up the cobbled and paved roads every few minutes connecting this neighborhood with downtown La Paz and with other neighborhoods of the city.

Pampajasi is now divided into Pampajasi Bajo, Central and Alto and has more than 200,000 inhabitants (information compiled on request by the INE, 2007), mostly recent Aymara migrants from rural areas, second generation migrants and in increasing numbers, long-time urban Aymara resident families. The streets are full of people, buses, cars and trucks from early morning until past midnight.

The Community of Urban Aymaras of Pampajasi (CAUP)

In 1983, groups of women began to organize in the Pampajasi neighborhood of the city of La Paz. (Fig. 3) Since then these groups have worked together, in community, expanding their membership from a handful of women to almost 500 women and men. In

2000-2001, they created a mission statement and after working with a lawyer for over two years, were able to write precedent-setting bylaws, acquire legal standing and officially adopt the name *Comunidad de Aymaras Urbanos de Pampajasi*, CAUP (Community of Urban Aymaras of Pampajasi).

This grassroots umbrella organization of first and second-generation migrant women to the city of La Paz has worked and organized using the tradition of the rural

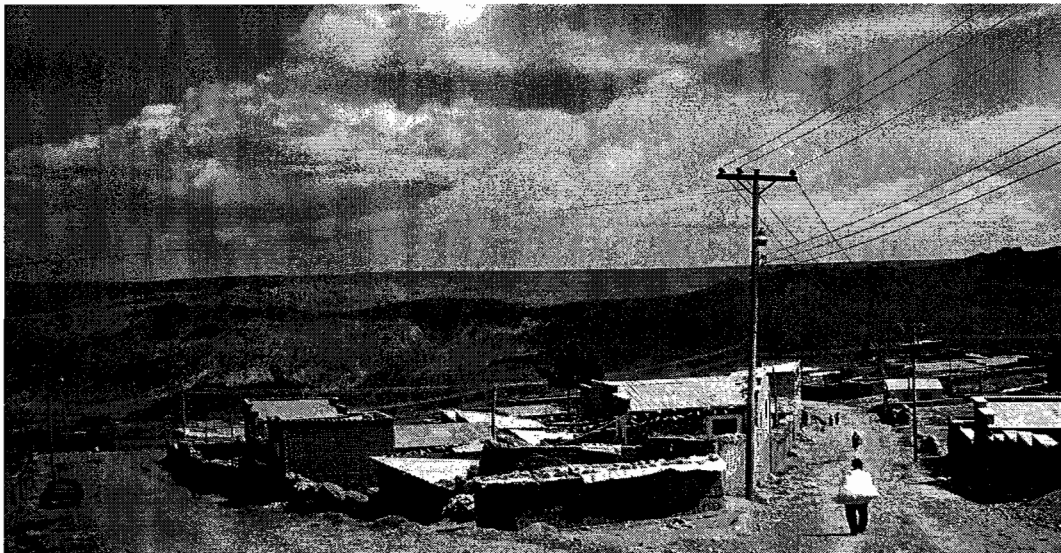


Figure 3. Pampajasi when CAUP first began, 1980s (Martensson).

ayllu-community. Their goals have been to promote urban Aymara identities, values and practices and to provide health services, childcare and senior care to low-income urban Aymara families. In addition, the CAUP is now increasingly being asked by other indigenous urban groups, as well as the current government, to participate in workshops and act as consultants in discussions of issues of indigenous and senior rights and legislation and to talk about their ayllu-community model of organization.

The CAUP brochure, a material sign of its new formal status, states that the organization seeks to promote the acknowledgement of urban indigenous people as an important part of the identity of the country; to promote increased consciousness about the social, economic and cultural reality of the urban indigenous people; and to promote the principles of solidarity, reciprocity and justice which are characteristic of the social formation of the native people of Bolivia.

The CAUP currently has three main components, each with an Aymara name: Machaq Uta, which means “new house”, is a daycare that provides meals to staff and children; Qulla Uta, which means “house of healing”, is where traditional healings and the sale of herbs and ritual supplies take place; and the Awicha, which means “grandmother”, includes 6 urban and 4 rural groups of senior citizens. The names of the urban Awicha groups are: Alto Pampajasi, Central, Bajo Pampajasi, San Antonio, Kupini and Senkata. The names of the rural Awicha groups are: Kusijata, Chachapoya, Belén and Huakuyo. Table 1 describes the membership of each of the three main components of the CAUP:

Table 1. CAUP membership

Machaq Uta	Qulla Uta	Awichas
(Daycare)	(House of Healing and Spirituality)	(Senior Centers)
Comprised of: 70-80 children between 6 months and 18 years of age The parents' group, who own and manage the daycare through a 4 member board 5 <i>tíos</i> ("aunts" and "uncles") who are the caretakers 1 cook (the mothers take turns, each cooking for a 30-day shift.)	Comprised of: 2 <i>yatiris</i> (ritual and herbal healers) 1 <i>qulliri</i> (herbal healer) 1 <i>awicha</i> (grandma) who is in charge of selling and replenishing the herbs and ritual supplies 1 translator, who is now translating to Spanish a new book on Aymara cosmovision, written in Aymara by one of the <i>yatiris</i>	Comprised of: 400 <i>awichas</i> (senior citizens) in 6 urban groups and 4 rural groups 1 facilitator 1 knitting coordinator Rotating community liaisons

Contributors to the efforts of the CAUP have been called "strategic supporters" in this thesis because their support has been adapted to the needs and desires articulated by

the members of the groups themselves and has come “with no strings attached”, at least not formally.

The CAUP has benefited greatly from the work of volunteers, private donors and donating organizations, both local and foreign. It is also strategically supported by the “CAUP Team”, which is a group of 12-14 young Aymara men and women, all of whom live in Pampajasi and only 2 of whom are full-time paid employees of the CAUP. They are also members of the CAUP, but they perform specific facilitating tasks as needed to support the work of the different groups.

In addition to the work of the CAUP team, the CAUP also continues to be supported by the two Social Community Psychologists who, 25 years ago, met several urban Aymara women who were looking for a way to improve the lives of their families and helped them find a way to help themselves. From that initial meeting to the current day, these psychologists have continued to provide strategic support which shall be described in greater detail in Chapter VII. Three years ago they initiated a slow retreat from active work with the CAUP, but continue to live in Pampajasi and attend some of the meetings and functions.

The CAUP today faces significant challenges, among which is that the Bolivian government is beginning to change the existing laws and institutions and is offering the CAUP opportunities to contribute from an indigenous perspective. Another challenge is their recent legal status which puts their community in a better position to attract funding sources but which will test their desire to maintain autonomy. The third challenge is the need to adjust to decreasing participation from their long-time supporters, social

community psychologists Javier Mendoza and Mercedes Zerda and the fourth challenge is the rapidly changing socio-cultural characteristics of the CAUP's grassroots membership itself. They are still urban Aymara, but are increasingly second and third generation (the children), instead of 1st generation, and their outlook and goals will influence the future course of the organization. These challenges will increasingly put the sustainability of this ayllu-based community to the test.

My first encounters with the CAUP

In the early 1980s I heard about an experience in local organizing taking place in the Pampajasi neighborhood of the city of La Paz. Javier Mendoza and Mercedes Zerda, two non-indigenous social community psychologists had moved to the then remote and mostly Aymara Pampajasi and had begun to provide psychological support to groups of urban Aymara women. This group had decided to create its own organization because they needed services and extra income and wanted to self-manage. This was at a time in which NGOs were doing a lot of development work in the city of El Alto and in poor neighborhoods of La Paz. Most grassroots groups there were organized through the initiative of an NGO, a religious group or a political party to receive services and work on a development project. I was working at a feminist NGO at the time and we were trying to implement several income-producing projects with groups of low-income migrant Aymara women in the nearby city of El Alto. I wanted to talk to Javier and Mercedes and decided to go to Pampajasi to find them.

At that time (the 1980s) transportation to Pampajasi was scarce. After several fruitless Sunday searches asking people if they knew Javier and Mercedes, I finally made contact. They were busy all day, every day, learning about Aymara lifestyles, language and values, and they were committed to providing support to these new groups of self-organizing women in Pampajasi by “being there” when they were called upon and otherwise, “just letting people be” (Mendoza, 2006, p. 1).

This self-organized grassroots organization work was very different from the development projects of the time which emphasized the skills that indigenous people had to learn and the ways in which they had to change in order to “develop” and make their lives better. The ways in which NGOs and donor organizations worked with Aymara people contrasted sharply with the social psychologists’ promotion of autonomy in planning, decision making and management of funds by which the women gained experience and empowerment through their own practice.

A few years later I started studying anthropology at the local state university but continued to visit Mercedes and Javier when I could, sharing in their anecdotes and the insights they achieved over the years of involvement with these women and others who joined the first organizers along the way. When I came to the U.S., I continued writing and visiting them once or twice a year and later developed the idea that I would like to learn more about the process undergone by the Pampajasi groups. I was familiar with some of the members but had never visited the groups themselves.

In 2006 my request to do an internship with the CAUP was approved by the CAUP members and by the University of Oregon. A few months later, the request to

conduct research, including interviews, focus groups and participating observation with the groups for this thesis was granted by the University and by the CAUP.

Research process

Research questions

The purpose of this research was to explore how the CAUP combined its cultural root and its cultural mission and how its longevity could be explained. Once the research process itself got underway, these are some of the research questions that I sought to answer:

In what sense was the CAUP a community and what kind of a community was it?

What role did gender play in this community?

What role did ethnicity play?

What elements of Aymara culture did the CAUP use to organize?

Why did they use them?

What obstacles did they encounter?

What were the roles of activism and “strategic support” in this process?

What theoretical tools could be used to frame this research?

Argument

Although the individual urban Aymaras that constitute the CAUP are diverse in their specific origin (from varying geographic regions and both recent and long-time urban Aymara residents), they have managed to construct a community based on the

habitus⁴ of the ayllu-community. They selected the components of the ayllu system that were the most useful to them and used them to organize. Throughout this process they made it a goal to be autonomous and were strategically supported in this by local and international activists and funders.

Although there are ayllu-communities in the highland countryside and the origins of the ayllu can be traced to the very beginnings of Aymara history, the ayllu system of organization was not explicitly used to organize communities in the city until the CAUP decided to use it. This habitus of ayllu-community has fed the capacity of the urban Aymara community of the CAUP to re-create a community in the city and construct its identity, not through subalternity, but through agency. This in turn has generated well-being and empowerment, and activist support was an important part of this process.

Relevance

It is my hope that the process and the results of this research will be useful to

- 1) the CAUP in their current stage of work, which seems to be one of transition;
- 2) grassroots organizations, illustrating how the old can inform the new, how alternate discourses, alternate forms of organization, and strategic activist support can be used towards empowerment;
- 3) other women who want to self-organize and are interested in the organizing experience of the women of Pampajasi;
- 4) researchers interested in alternative forms of organization in the city, particularly women's organizations; and
- 5) inform the thoughts and practice of policy makers on these topics.

As strong social and indigenous movements are taking place both in Bolivia and in the rest of the continent and more debates are taking place on the topics of gender and identity and empowerment, it is my hope that this research on the CAUP's experience will contribute insights to the potential of community and strategic support and activism.

Methods and timeline

The research for this thesis took place in Pampajasi, a neighborhood of the city of La Paz, Bolivia over a period of 6 months and included interviews and focus groups with the adult CAUP members who are primarily first and second generation migrants to the city of La Paz. I also conducted interviews with non-members familiar with this organization's history and process.

The methods used for this research were interviews, focus groups, informal conversations, and participating observation. The interview and focus group subjects were recruited from the three CAUP components, and from non-CAUP subjects that were familiar with the organization, and informed about the purpose and methods in which the interactions would take place and of the possible risks involved. Eighteen one-to-two hour interviews and two two-hour focus groups were recorded with men and women aged between 25 and 70 years of age, mostly of indigenous origin, but also of non-indigenous, and some of European, descent. These materials were transcribed and then coded. Field notes with observations about activities, events, the general environment and daily conversations were taken every day, transcribed and also coded. Notes from the internship experience were also transcribed and coded.

The internship period took place between June 1st and September 10th of 2006. Fieldwork was accomplished between January 5th and April 12, 2007. The total time of contact was approximately six months during 2006 and 2007.

Changes in the research process

Consents were obtained and the interviews and the focus groups with the CAUP team members took place as anticipated. The focus groups with the Awicha groups took place, but were not recorded because most group members felt more comfortable with my note-taking instead of recording. In the same manner, instead of interviews with Qulla Uta clients, I did participating observation and talked with the clients as they waited to be seen by the yatiri, the physical and spiritual healer, or the qulliri, the herbal healer. I was present during a few healing sessions in which the healers explained the procedures. These notes were also transcribed and coded. In addition to the one anticipated interview with a non-member of the CAUP who was familiar with their work, I was able to contact and have informal conversations with two more non-members, who provided many important insights for this research.

Interviews

Almost all the interviews took place within the premises of each respective group's facility. The interviews with the Machaq Uta mothers, board members and caretakers took place in the meeting rooms or classrooms; Awicha group interviews and informal conversations took place in their meeting rooms or outside patios. The Qulla Uta

group members did their interviews in the back rooms of their offices or the front room where the herbs and supplies are stored and bought. The CAUP team focus groups took place in their own small meeting room in the Machaq Uta facility and most of the individual team member interviews also took place there. When it was not possible to use the groups' own facilities, interviews were completed in various public locations. Two were completed in public eateries in the city and two were done in one of the two houses in which I was residing at the time. The three interviews done with non-members of CAUP were also done in public places in the city, including two coffee shops and a restaurant. When the interviews were done in the CAUP facilities, I provided some snacks and refreshments.

Participating observation

I participated as often as possible in the group activities, each day of the week and often during the weekends. This participation, detailed below, spanned a wide range of activities including formal meetings, daily work and child care, health care, income-generating activities, the CAUP Team development work with other rural communities, social events and celebrations. There were several overlapping meetings taking place: regular weekly CAUP team meetings, weekly Qulla Uta team meetings, individual Awicha group meetings as well as Machaq Uta parents and their board meetings. I also had the opportunity to see all the groups in their ordinary day-to-day interactions. The Awicha group members that are living in CAUP facilities are often visiting or running errands during the day, so I preferred to visit each group on the day of their

weekly formal meeting and also to attend monthly Awicha accounting meetings in which expenditures were carefully tallied, examined and reported. Also, I was there to see how, in January or February, new authorities are elected in each group and formally and ritually entrusted with the leadership for that year.

If I arrived earlier or stayed after the meeting, I participated in some of their activities. I also accompanied some of the bi-monthly visits of the CAUP team to the Awicha groups living in the countryside, which take a full day and often require sleepovers.

Aside from these regularly scheduled events, I attended the one or two seasonal rituals and festivities held every month or two in which the CAUP was sometimes participant and sometimes organizer.

There are also daily music sessions and classes with the Awicha groups and with several groups of children and teens from Machaq Uta. What stood out for me was the quiet respect in most teacher/student relationships and also among men, women, and children up to the age of 18. The Machaq Uta knitting group gets together to plan their work, as do the income-producing groups in each Awicha group, who work together baking bread, making quinoa “cookies”, knitting, or cooking food and then sell the products. Men are enthusiastic participants in these work groups, except for the knitting groups which are mostly composed of women. I went at 5 a.m. on a few occasions to watch the making of the quinoa “cookies” and the baking of bread and stayed for seven or eight hours as the 60, 70 and 80 year old Awichas worked without pause. While some members worked to prepare the food for sale, others cooked to feed the workers. Often

musical instruments were brought out and played and I joined in. Qulla Uta is open Monday through Friday to the general public and I often stopped by to chat during the day.

Machaq Uta is open every day of the week and I often visited the tías, Doña Silvia, Doña Bea, Doña Elizabeth and Doña Lucía, while they were performing their caretaking functions and listened to their stories about the groups and the families and children. I shared some time with tío Nolberto and his youngsters while they did their homework and while they listened to music or played soccer or volleyball. These same youngsters are organized into several Andean music-playing groups and I participated in some of their practice sessions which take place several times during the week with tío Javier. Other times I helped in the kitchen and had interesting informal conversations with the cook and family members that showed up to help.

I was present when one of the yatiris (spiritual and physical healer) of Qulla Uta, Don Carlos Yujra, better known as Don Mario, hosted a celebratory consultation meeting with other yatiris, regarding positive reforms to the laws on the practice of traditional medicine. I was able to participate in some of his ritual and divining work and to observe the qulliri (herbal healer) Doña Virginia, “Vicky”, as she cured clients at Qulla Uta and at the Awicha groups, and when Don Antonio, another yatiri, met with me to explain several rituals and the meaning of each one of its components.

I also participated in special events such as the July 22nd Pampajasi “Entrada” (ritual parade with dancing and music), was a spectator and photographer for the Aug 2nd Day of the Indian celebration at the Villa Copacabana school, 2006, a “Wajta” (ritual

offering ceremony for the CAUP) in August, 2006, the 2nd year anniversary of the Senkata Awicha group in El Alto, and I accompanied the CAUP members on several trips to the rural CAUP groups during both the internship and research periods. Tío Javier also organized an event for father's day, where the children and the tíos and the Awichas sang, danced, played and acted in skits and several music events or *peñas*, with impressive out-door stage décor, in-house and also invited musicians and groups, tickets being sold and also refreshments.

I had the opportunity to participate in a two-day event in February, 2007, in the town of Copacabana where almost two hundred rural and urban Awicha group members put on music, dance and theater performances on the main plaza. Finally, I accompanied some of the CAUP members to a few private events, such as wakes and birthdays and was godmother to a young lady in her "quince" (grand "coming-out" party for a fifteen-year-old, which combined modern and traditional elements).

Research authorization, the ayllu-community way

The first perception I had that the CAUP was indeed self-managed and that things were handled differently than in mainstream Bolivian organizations was when I first requested to do research with the CAUP. I had made contact with Javier Mendoza and Mercedes Zerda, the social psychologists working with the CAUP, because they were the only ones I knew by name in the CAUP. I assumed that "they would handle it" because they were the *q'aras*, the white people, and they were "in charge" and they would let me know when and if I could come to Pampajasi to do the research.

Instead, I was asked to come to a CAUP meeting to present my request directly to the group. I did that and my request was placed in line, within the regular order of the day. I sat through the whole meeting and was then invited to state my business. After I did that, each person was consulted individually and gave his/her opinion regarding the advisability of this research. The members agreed that the focus group interviews would be included in the agendas of the regular meetings of each group.

The “going through the group” is an important example of equal participation and decision making, of democracy through direct participation, which is an important ayllu-community practice. Dissenting opinions are voiced in the group, then discussed and resolved. When action is taken, it is participatory and done with respect to the group, to the community to which all belong.

At least twice during CAUP Team meetings the issue of the validity of research came up. Once, a group mentioned that complete cross-cultural understanding is impossible to achieve and on another occasion, a CAUP team member said that researchers were naïve to think that after a few visits, a few interviews and a few questions, they could really grasp what was going on, go home and write all about it. While I agree with both comments in principle, this thesis will attempt to give an approximation to the CAUP’s work “with an outsider’s eyes”, and with the awareness that these descriptions are the result of a brief period of interaction and observation.

Photos

Photographs were offered as a thank-you gift to the CAUP members and many participants sought to be photographed several times. The pictures were taken with the consent of each individual member and the authorization of the University of Oregon.

Language

The language used for the interviews was always Spanish as most of the members of CAUP are now bi-lingual or at least understand Spanish. When some of the answers to the questions were given in Aymara, a group member or a CAUP Team member translated for me. This happened primarily during the participating observation, when the CAUP members were interacting among themselves and usually speaking Aymara.

Historical and theoretical frameworks

To situate the experience of the CAUP within a historical context, I have included materials in this thesis which highlight the conditions of social and political marginalization which Aymara peoples have been enduring and combating since the Spanish Colony.

I have also included information on the ayllu-community, which is the nucleus of Andean socio-political and ritual organization and which in recent years has acquired symbolic properties towards social mobilization. It is less often mentioned that, at least as far back as in Incan times, women were the heads of their own ayllus, through systems of parallel inheritance of land and titles.

The theoretical concepts of identity and representation, social movements, subalternity, agency, and the habitus have contributed to connect these discussions to those taking place in Bolivia and in other countries on related topics. The ideas and practices of “community” and of the ayllu-community are central to the CAUP’s work and therefore have also been used to briefly contextualize the descriptions of the CAUP’s experience.

Within this perspective of theory, the organizing experience of the CAUP can be seen against a backdrop in which indigenous rebellions have produced brief breakthroughs of agency in the conditions of subalternity throughout the Colony and the Republic. At the same time, the ayllu-community, the Andean indigenous community, has persisted as a geopolitical reality and as a powerful symbol and inspiration for identity-based social movements and change. From a theoretical point of view, the habitus of ayllu-community would be the basis for the CAUP’s urban community and the road towards the strengthening of Aymara identities towards empowerment.

Terminology

There are many variations in the ways the terms “Indian” and “indigenous” have been used throughout Bolivian history: by the hegemonic criollos (the descendents of the Spanish colonizers), by the Indians or indigenous peoples themselves, and also by peoples outside of Bolivia. Therefore, I will use the term “Indian” or “Indio” according to how it was originally written or expressed in the documents and interviews quoted. The term “indigenous peoples” will be used when the actors themselves have used it and

when discussing national or international issues, such as legislation. The term “peasant” will be used when the context refers to class-related issues and to the 1952 Revolution.

The same principle will be applied to the term “ayllu”: I will try to use the terms that the actors themselves, the members of these organizations, use to describe this term. The term ayllu will be used to describe the original Andean form of organization. Otherwise, I will use the term ayllu-community or “community” to describe an organization with ayllu-roots, as in Andean Bolivia the term “community” in Spanish is used interchangeably with the word “ayllu”.

And finally, most of the story of the CAUP took place before they adopted the name CAUP. Therefore to avoid writing “the-groups-which-would-later-become-the-CAUP” when referring to the first groups that organized before the years before 2000 and 2001 when their legal status was approved, I will more often just call them “the CAUP”, because the surviving founding members are still members of the Awicha groups of the CAUP. In other words, the same founding group of women has expanded its work, experience and membership through time until the present.

Description of the content of each chapter

The Introduction gave a brief overview of Bolivia, of the city of La Paz, of the neighborhood of Pampajasi, and finally of the CAUP and how I first became acquainted with this organization. Then, it described the research process including questions and goals, the main argument, the relevance of the research and to whom it might be useful and the methods used. This chapter also provided information on the historical context,

the theoretical framework and terminology used. This last part summarized the content of each chapter.

Chapter Two of this thesis provides historical background on the Aymara people and on the ayllu, the unit of social and political organization in the Andes; ayllu-community organizing is the thread which runs through this thesis. A description of the origins of the Aymara and their existence predating their conquest by the Inca and the Spanish lays the ground for a review of “the long history” of the indigenous people of the highlands of Bolivia. The 1952 revolution is a landmark for the beginning of the “short history” of the indigenous movements (Rivera, 1986) taking place in Bolivia since then. Chapter Two then follows the path of indigenous and social movements until they converge in the election of the indigenous president Evo Morales.

Chapter Three tells the story of the CAUP in the first years and then describes the organization of each of its components, the activities they engage in and some ideas about their future challenges. The last part of this chapter briefly describes their sources of funding.

Chapter Four explores the issues of subalternity, identity, and representation as they pertain to migration and therefore to the situation encountered by the founding members of the CAUP as poor, migrant, indigenous women. The chapter also touches upon the situation of their children, and of the awichas, and the experience of founding an identity-based grassroots service organization of women, grandmothers and children under conditions of discrimination and racism.

Chapter Five takes off from within the CAUP, from its dynamics as an urban Aymara ayllu-community and as a movement. The neighborhood of Pampajasi is described as a background for the first organizing efforts of the CAUP followed by a description of how the CAUP comes together as a community through habitus and how agency arises. Finally, Chapter Five discusses whether the CAUP views itself as a social movement and perhaps a “model” for other organization efforts.

Chapter Six describes how the CAUP functions and what makes it a community: its forms of yearly rotating authority, participation and collective problem-solving, solidarity, reciprocity, and the roles played by music, social and ritual use of coca leaves⁵, rituals and group memory. In this chapter I also discuss how some of this organization’s elements have contributed to its longevity and sustainability through time: well-being as defined, expressed and developed by the members as well as ownership, pride, agency, and continuing hard work. The strengthening of the collectivity has contributed to the support and strengthening of the individual members; some individual cases are described. This chapter also describes how the members of this grassroots organization, the CAUP, have been constructing change in their groups with their own ideological and practical tools, organization, and the support of activists; it describes how each of the traditional elements of ayllu-community used by the CAUP contributes to agency and empowerment. The chapter concludes by mentioning some “critiques and responses” noted by insiders and outsiders in order to provide a little more depth to the previous descriptions.

Chapter Seven focuses on activism and strategic support systems. This chapter tells the story from these angles, beginning with Mercedes and Javier, both Social Community Psychologists, who have supported the organizing efforts of the CAUP since its beginnings. Also described in this chapter is the work of the local and foreign volunteers, the continuing contribution of private donors, and the relations of reciprocity that link them all.

Chapter Eight describes insights and reflections regarding the issues of “location” within the research process. As Lynn Stephen wrote, social processes do not “exist in the world waiting to be committed to paper” (2007, p. 322); they are brought to life through the interactions of actors and researchers. Therefore this chapter attempts to briefly discuss “the politics of location”, explicating where the researcher was located and why this knowledge can contribute to a better understanding of the research results.

Chapter Nine presents the conclusions: how the CAUP started organizing on the basis of a common habitus and then became a community; the process of agency and empowerment that has taken place through the community-building process; and how because the CAUP was able to function autonomously without interference, agency and empowerment grew together, parallel with the development of community. For the two long-time supporters, Javier Mendoza and Mercedes Zerda, it was a psychological practice of non-intervention and support. From an anthropological perspective, it was a cultural experience in which groups of women developed a group identity, a sense of community and developed empowerment on the basis of a habitus of ayllu-community

and were supported in this by activism. It is not a chicken and egg story but rather one in which both elements – group and supporters - found each other and interacted.

Chapter Nine also briefly describes how this process fits in with current social and political events in Bolivia and how, by better understanding the ways in which ayllu values are used towards self-determination, groups like the CAUP, researchers, activists, policy makers, development specialists, and those interested in issues of indigenous oppression and empowerment in a post-colonial society will have more tools with which to deal with these issues, within the framework of the nation.

In summary, this thesis attempts to describe a context - the history of the Aymara people and the ayllu - and then in successive chapters, the dynamics behind the construction of the CAUP community, the growth, the learning, the process by which individual women with common problems sought a common solution through the broad formats of an ayllu-community in the city.

This thesis is an analysis of the CAUP as a community of mostly women: how this community came together, what keeps it going, and its organizational and cultural matrix. It is not a “history” of the CAUP as such; it focuses instead on the spirit and the mechanics of what the CAUP community is today. This thesis explores what keeps the CAUP alive and what insights this experience can provide to other grassroots organizations and to other groups of women seeking to organize, as well as to researchers and policymakers interested in alternative forms of organization, in this time of indigenous empowerment in Bolivia.

Endnotes:

¹ As we will discuss in chapter II, the criollos were the sons and the daughters of the Spaniards, born in the Americas.

² In comparison to Bolivia's \$2,619 per capita annual income, Argentina and Spain, to where many unemployed Bolivians have migrated, have per capita incomes of \$13,298 and \$25,047, respectively. According to the same UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) source, the US's per capita income is \$39,676.

³ These affirmations have been contested by some authors who argue that in each of the national census, the criteria to define "indigenous" has been different. This criteria has gone from mere estimations of census indigenous populations, particularly in the lowlands, to indigeneity as race and as judged by the census-takers, to questions about race, questions regarding language, race and language, ethnic origin and most recently, to self-ascription. These authors cite other polls done by private researchers who have come up with other percentages ("Mestizos, más que indígenas son una mayoría en Bolivia", La Razon, online, 2007.)

⁴ Peter Jenkins stresses that the habitus, concept created by Pierre Bourdieu, is a "generative basis of practices" (2002, p. 79) and takes place when people act without apparently reflecting on it, when they seem to automatically "know" how to proceed, as if "embodying culture".

⁵ The scientific name of coca is *Erythroxylon coca*. Coca bushes have small green leaves and woody stems and grow in the temperate zones of Bolivia and other Latin American countries. The leaves are slowly sucked and chewed, in combination with vegetable ashes usually called *llipta*, to produce a mild stimulant and analgesic effect. Coca has many health benefits for people who live in high altitudes and is an important part of Andean culture, ritual and social life (Coca Museum website).

CHAPTER II

AYMARA PEOPLE AND AYLLU-COMMUNITY, PAST AND PRESENT

The importance of history for the consolidation of indigenous identities

In keeping with the theory that winners write history, it is not surprising that the history of the subalternized indigenous peoples of Bolivia was subsumed in the larger hegemonic narratives of national history written by non-indigenous elites. Until the 1980s, Bolivian children learned in their history textbooks that the indigenous peoples were part of a distant, mythical past. The oral nature of indigenous peoples' history, traditions, and beliefs compounded the perception that the Aymara were "a-historic" as a people or that their history had ended in a remote period before "real history" began.

In the 1960s and early 1970s this situation started to change. In the early 1980s the Taller de Historia Oral Andina, or THOA (Workshop of Oral Andean History) began to visit the countryside and record the oral history of the Aymaras during the century of republican history prior to the 1952 revolution (Choque, Mamani, 2001, p. 205). These efforts to de-colonize Aymara history helped Bolivians open their eyes to the alternate realities of Bolivia, not only to the reality of poverty and class relations, but to the realities of exclusion and discrimination against indigenous populations of Bolivia.

In his book *Mestizaje Up-Side Down*, Javier Sanjinés describes this new awareness and the concept of the "two eyes": one "westernized", rational, theorizing eye

which until recent decades only saw Bolivian socio-cultural and political realities through the concept of “class”; and an alternate, non-theorizing, more action-oriented eye that revealed the realities on the ground of oppressed indigenous nations (Sanjinés, 2005, p. 178-179). The concept of the “two eyes” was created by the “Kataristas” in the early 1970s; many say by Victor Hugo Cárdenas, a Katarista leader who later became vice-president of the nation.

“Katarismo” was the result of the urban Aymara identity-based political groups which in the early 1970s came together to create a powerful indigenous movement named for Tupac Katari, an Aymara leader in the massive uprisings of 1781 and 1782. The idea of the two eyes was a proposal to re-focus, re-center how Bolivia had perceived itself until then.

Therefore, after many years of obscurity, the increasing acknowledgement of a version of Aymara history parallel to “official” history enhanced Aymara people’s sense of identity, their capacity to imagine themselves as a community. Although the United Nations Indigenous Commission and Bolivian laws acknowledge the moral and legal right of indigenous peoples to self-determination and to uphold their own beliefs, customs, and way of life, the “on-the-ground” implementation of these rights has yet to happen within everyday life. Therefore, the acknowledgement of the histories of all the indigenous peoples of Bolivia is an important first step towards constructing a nation for all.

Within the construction of Aymara identities, another important element is the ayllu-community. Sinclair Thomson defines “ayllu” as “the traditional Andean communal

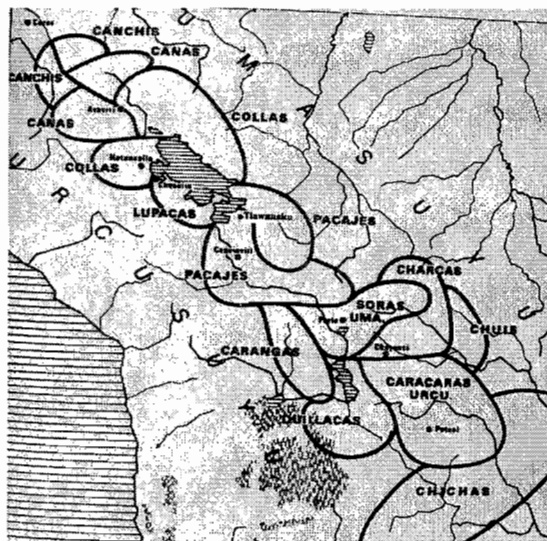
unit” (2006, p. 11). Because this concept embodies Andean values and practices, it has played an important role in the history and the imaginary of the Aymaras. As an example, in the massive popular uprisings of 2003 in El Alto, ayllu-community principles were used to organize the resistance to the troops sent out to defend the government of President Sánchez de Lozada (Ticona, 2006, p. 89). This chapter will highlight the presence of the ayllu-community organization through the indigenous history of Bolivia, so that the relevance of rural ayllu-community organizing in the city can be further discussed in later chapters.

Origin of the Aymara peoples

According to Aymara oral traditions, their original divinities emerged from the waters of Lake Titikaka in the Western highlands of the Department of La Paz. The lake is considered the womb of the mother earth, the *taypi* or center from which the civilizing heroes of the Aymara were born. The earth and the heavens also came from this sacred lake and also several increasingly evolved human groups called *humanidades* which succeeded each other after cataclysmic events. This is why the Aymara and later the Inca built temples on the mainland and on the islands in the lake (Montes, 1999, pp. 107-112).

The ethno-geographical origins of the Aymara are unclear, but may have coincided with the mid or last period of the Tiwanaku and Wari civilizations about 4,000 years ago. These peoples settled around Lake Titikaka in what we now call chiefdoms or kingdoms. Their names were Canchis, Canas, Collas, Lupacas, Pacajes, Carangas, Soras, Quillacas, Caracaras, Chuis and Chichas. These were vast territories, some very high and

well-suited for the raising of llamas, vicuñas and alpacas, others with a more benign climate and rich soils for agriculture (Map 3). According to the Aymara historian Roberto



Map 3. Aymara kingdoms (T. Bouisse in Montes, 1990, p. 111).

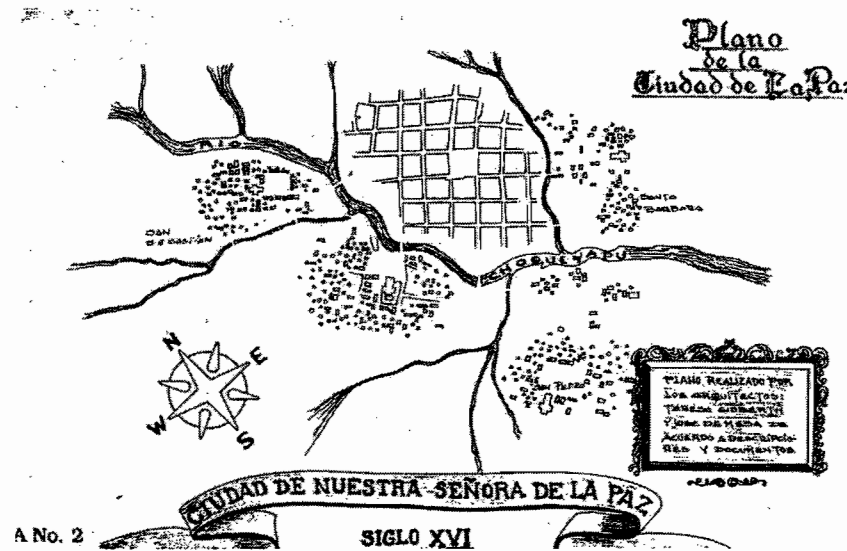
Choque Canqui, their political and social organization was based on the ayllu and the *marka*, which is a group of ayllus (Choque Canqui, 1992, p. 60, 61). In the ayllu system, the ayllus themselves have a particular structure in which each ayllu straddles the mountainous region: Half the ayllu is in the valleys and the other half in the mountains, which allows for trade of products native to those places and a balance of goods across the whole ayllu. This is in keeping with the concepts of *Urqusuyu*, “male”, which is related to the mountains (“high”) and *Umasuyu*, “female”, related to the valleys (“low”). The ayllu is not only geographic, ecological and political, but the space where the divinities and *pachamama* (mother earth) complement each other, as man and woman (*chacha-warmi*). These concepts will be explored more fully in Chapter 5.

According to linguistic and architectural evidence, apparently the Quechua-speaking Inca people also originated in the area surrounding the Lake Titikaka and then migrated north and created an empire with their capital city Cuzco. The Inca coveted the lands inhabited by these diverse kingdoms and conducted many military expeditions to conquer them. According to Cieza, Sarmiento de Gamboa and other Spanish chroniclers, the Inca armies were defeated many times including by the Cullaca [sic] women at Warmipukara, the women's fortress. When this happened the Inca ruler and an army of 120,000 men laid siege upon the fortress of Llallawapukara for three years and finally subjugated these fierce peoples. Once incorporated into the Empire, the Inca ruler made the Aymara part of his army as well as his personal guard and gave them many privileges as a reward for their bravery (Montes, 1999, p. 197, 198). About two hundred years after the Inca laid claim on these lands, the Spanish conquered them all and founded Spanish cities atop the indigenous cities, notably La Paz in 1538 (Choque Canqui, 1992, p. 60-63).

Spanish colonization: two nations

The Spanish king, Carlos the V, had decreed that cities had to be built in vacant lands, away from the indigenous populations. La Paz, however, was founded amongst the "*indios*" that inhabited the valley of Chuquiabo because this area was an important religious and commercial hub. To establish a physical boundary, the Spanish constructed their city, La Paz, on the northern margins of the Choqueyapu River, and relocated the indigenous peoples to *reducciones* [similar to indigenous reservations] on the opposite side of the river, in what were called the "Indian parishes": namely San Pedro, Santa

Bárbara and San Sebastián (Map 4). The Spanish had their neighborhoods, markets and churches. The indigenous side “functioned as a community or an Andean



Map 4. Map of 16th Century City of La Paz, Spanish section shown in square grid (Mesa, in Barragán, 1990, p. 310).

ayllu [...] divided in two halves, or moieties, *Hanansaya* and *Hurinsaya*, each one composed of a certain number of ayllus” (Barragán, 1990, p. 22). These indigenous parishes, called *Chuquiabo* in the Spanish chronicles, are still known today as *Chuquiago-marka*.

Although the indigenous people and the Spanish were separated geographically, culturally and socially, each was half of the dual unity of colonial co-existence. Both interacted in day-to-day life under the weight of Spanish hegemony. According to Rossana Barragán, ethnicity and class were almost synonymous until the indigenous rebellion and siege of La Paz by Tupac Katari in 1781 (1990, p. 230).

After attempts to break up the Andean system of the ayllus by uprooting and relocating indigenous peoples in *reducciones*, the Spanish colonizers understood that it

was in their best interest to preserve the remaining societal and productive units of the ayllus and use them for their own benefit: without the ayllu structure the whole Colonial economic system was jeopardized. The native authorities were in the dire position of protecting the members of their ayllu and also acting as middlemen for the Spanish. The members of the ayllus were recruited by these local authorities for the *mita*, or forced labor in the mines of Potosí, which took an enormous toll of lives each year, and for other forms of servitude.

By the 1700s many of the lands of the ayllus in proximity to the city of La Paz had been converted into *haciendas* or extensive farmlands owned by the Spanish. The Indians who ended up living on *haciendas* did so because the ayllu lands they lived on were sold or leased by the Spanish and criollos¹ and so the Indians were either transferred over together with the land to work as serfs and to provide personal services to their masters or they offered their services to the *haciendas* because they had lost their own lands. Some rural indigenous peoples lived on rural ayllu lands and paid the *tributo* or local head-tax to the Spanish. Others, unable or unwilling to pay taxes and work in the mines, became landless peasants or *yanaconas*.

The ayllus did not remain isolated and their members were forced to participate in the local economy by selling firewood and other goods in the city to add to their earnings from the mines in order to pay the head-tax. To participate in this commercial activity they had to compete with an increasing number of independent *mestizo*² merchants whose knowledge of the city and the Spanish language put them at a great advantage. The complex social, economic, and ethnic stratification that emerged within colonial society

gave rise to ways of naming and describing individuals and groups according to their heritage that were diverse and changing. What began as racial denominations, in time became more subtle social constructions. However, to this day and because of the continuing "internal colonialism"³ that persists in Bolivia, in ideological terms, Bolivians continue to use the poles of *q'aras*⁴ and *indios* to identify themselves and to discriminate against others.

There are at least two perspectives through which to envision the relations between colonizers and colonized in what would later become Bolivia and Peru. First as a time of clearly established hegemony on the part of the Spanish and hidden forms of resistance on the part of the colonized Indians, "hidden transcripts", where underneath attitudes of submission, there was a progressive guerrilla like undermining of the colonial system (Scott, 1990). Secondly, as a time in which the conquered Indians sought to re-establish relations of reciprocity and balance and therefore, of dialogue among equals, elements upon which social interaction was based in Andean societies.

According to Tristan Platt's ethno-historic and linguistic studies (Platt, 1987), Andean peoples would have seen the Spanish Conquest from the perspective of a whole trying to re-balance itself. In the Andean perspective there were "wars of balance", *tinku* and "wars of obliteration", *chaxwa*, or "cruel wars" where there was no possibility of "re-socializing" and "conciliating" the contending sides. Accordingly, the Spanish Conquest itself would not have been as nefarious and intolerable to the Aymara as the subsequent efforts to quash all vestiges of culture that were not Spanish and Catholic and in the 1800s, of all that was not individualistic and capable of generating wealth. Therefore, it is

likely that during the colonization Aymara and Quechua peoples would have made efforts to work out some form of coexistence by accepting the mita, the Indian head-tax and other forms of service as a dubious but potentially acceptable price for peace.

If this was true, the possibilities for a peaceful coexistence would have diminished and Indians become increasingly and irreconcilably affronted by the unrelenting dominance of the Spanish which was expressed in ever-increasing taxes in products and in precious metals, serf labor which often represented a death sentence, the increasing encroachment and take-over of ancestral ayllu lands and the lack of religious tolerance and respect for cultural practices. All these would have become even more unbearable burdens, with few or no gestures of reciprocity from the Spanish.

According to Tristan Platt, because this was an imperialistic and protracted war intended to exterminate not only lives but systems of value and belief, the subsequent awareness that peaceful co-existence after the Spanish Conquest was not possible could be used to explain the outrage that manifested in the form of frequent indigenous uprisings in what is now Perú and Bolivia, beginning shortly after the Spanish Conquest, some lasting many years and often overlapping with others, some localized and others covering vast inter-regional territories (See Montes, 1999, pp. 319-350).

The Republic and “the indigenous problem”

According to Brooke Larson, in early 1800s (around the time when criollo-led rebel forces in the territories of what is now Bolivia formally began the war to gain independence from the Spanish), the highland indigenous population was almost equally

divided between *comunarios*, the people who lived in ayllus, and *yanaconas*, landless peasants who lived and worked on *haciendas* or rural properties owned by criollos, descendents of the Spanish (2004, p. 204). The ayllus surrounded the highland cities.

In 1809 when the fight for independence began, both the Spanish and the rebels recruited indigenous combatants in the different areas where uprisings took place.

Indigenous people were caught up in the fighting according to the specific politics of their regions, but were aware that the outcome would probably not greatly change their status (Albó, in Albó & Barnadas, 1990, p. 118).

After sixteen years of guerrilla type warfare, the territories of what later would become Bolivia gained independence from Spain in 1825 and the liberal criollo nation makers embarked on the contradictory mission of trying to retain their privileges and at the same time create a nation similar to Western models, with equal rights and freedoms for all. At this point, the population of Bolivia was almost three-quarters indigenous (Pentland, in Larson, 2004, p. 204) and mostly rural. After discussing the matter, the criollos decided to exclude the indigenous population from full citizenship because they would not be an asset for the construction of the new Republic. They were considered primitive and inferior, doomed to extinction according to the Darwinian interpretations of the time, as illustrated by this quote:

“To tear that land away from the hands of the ignorant or backward Indian, penniless, lacking in ability or will to cultivate and hand it over to the enterprising, active and intelligent white race, avid for property, is in reality the healthiest social and economic transition for Bolivia. To take it away [desvincularla] from the dead hands of the Indian is to restore it to its useful, productive and beneficial condition for the entirety of humanity; in this way it will turn into an adequate

instrument for the goals of Providence.” (J.V. Dorado, hacienda owner. Rivera, 1986, p. 13)

However, Brooke Larson and other historians have found that in the forty years after 1838, the membership of comunarios in the ayllus of La Paz, Oruro and Potosí swelled by 24% percent, increasing the amount of head taxes paid to the state.

Conversely, as more and more indigenous peoples reclaimed their ayllu identities, the haciendas lost their *colonos* (indigenous workers on the haciendas). By 1877, the last year that records were kept, the indigenous tributo or head-tax amounted to 76% of the total revenue of the state (Larson, 2004, pp. 204-206). The implication is that in this period indigenous people preferred to pay taxes and live in their ayllus as opposed to continuing to be serfs in the haciendas.

This was the root of the so-called “Indian problem”. The double bind for the criollos was that the taxes that provided more than half of the national revenue until the mid- 1800s came from the Indians that still lived on ayllu lands. Therefore, in exchange for the head-tax, criollos were compelled to offer some guarantees and protections for the indigenous ayllus so that they could continue to live and pay tribute as ayllu-communities, on the margins of the state. Indians and Spanish occupied separate dimensions, politically, culturally, socially, and legally as if they lived in separate nations (Antezana, in Rivera, 1986).

For this reason, indigenous peoples were finally conceded partial inclusion in the nation through citizenship without the right to vote, as the new Republic had few other means to support itself except through the indigenous head tax. Besides, “three-fourths of

the territory of Bolivia was at that point in the hands of the indigenous communities” (Choque Canqui, 1993, p. 7) and they were needed as labor to industrialize the country, to build roads and railroads and work on the haciendas. As Brooke Larson writes: Bolivia, like the other Andean republics, entered the era of republican life “dragging behind them the detritus of colonial attitudes, habits and institutions” (2004, p. 34).

As to the situation of the ayllu and of the comunarios (members of the ayllus), despite the “relatively institutionalized relationship” between the ayllus and the state (Larson, 2004, p. 206), several successive Bolivian presidents overrode these considerations, expropriated indigenous lands and auctioned them off to wealthy liberal criollos. These colonial sentiments were still alive one hundred years later when Bautista Saavedra, president of Bolivia between 1920 and 1925 wrote:

If an inferior race, placed next to a superior one, has to disappear, as Le Bon has said [and if]...we are to exploit the Aymara and Quechua Indians in our benefit or eliminate them because they constitute an obstacle and a deterrent to our progress, let us proceed, frankly and energetically. (Saavedra quoted in Larson, 2004, p. 18)

Most of the ayllu lands that were expropriated by the State and sold off to the criollos never became productive farms; they were left fallow and became what was called *latifundios*, or extensive undeveloped agricultural properties. The indigenous peoples contested the expropriation of their lands as far as they could through legal means, hiring mestizo lawyers to defend their cases in the courts. In many cases they presented documentation dating back to the sixteenth century to back up their property claims, as the Spanish had in some cases granted legal existence to some of the highland

ayllus in exchange for labor and a peaceful co-existence. Some indigenous ayllus bought back their land in auctions. The courts took years to rule and in the meantime the leaders of the protesting ayllus were imprisoned or killed. This led to more uprisings, shady political deals, unfulfilled promises and political strife. Fernando Montes cites Garcia who affirms that just between 1861 and 1940 there were more than 2,000 uprisings (1999, p. 320).

Ethnic unrest has persisted in Bolivia because the legal rights of the Aymaras and other indigenous peoples have not been acknowledged. In other cases, the laws exist but have not been enforced. In practical terms, the rights of indigenous peoples to exist as such, to have political participation, to have property titles to their lands, and to receive education and services, have yet to be put into practice.

The Chaco war and aftermath: together in the trenches

The Chaco war (1932-35) between Bolivia and Paraguay cost both countries 100,000 dead and many more wounded; it cost Bolivia the loss of most of the territory in dispute within the Chaco region. This war, with its forced recruitment in urban and rural areas and then its mismanagement and humiliating defeat, generated profound discontent among all Bolivians. This dissatisfaction with how the war had been managed had a “nationalizing” effect, inspiring reforms and a different kind of “imagined community” (Anderson, 1994, p. 89-96).

Silvia Rivera, sociologist and long-time activist for indigenous rights describes this period well in her book *Oprimidos pero no vencidos* (1986). She describes that

combatants from different ethnic origins and social classes had come together to fight in the war and became more aware of the political and economic crisis the country was undergoing. Associations of veterans and secret military societies were created. Two successive military presidents, David Toro and Germán Busch, made attempts to “broaden the social base” of Bolivia and strengthen its economy; A Ministry of Labor was created and the Standard Oil Company, accused of selling oil to the enemy, was nationalized. The ayllu-school of Warisata, created in 1931 by two innovative and visionary teachers to train rural teachers in the highlands, amid attacks and raids from the criollo sectors that opposed indigenous education, finally received government support during the governments of presidents Toro and Busch. New leftist parties and the first peasant unions were created among the farm workers in the valleys of Cochabamba. In the early 1940s the first peasant strike took place among the hired hands on haciendas in the rural Aymara and Quechua regions of Bolivia, coordinated by activists like Santos Marka T’ula and Antonio Alvarez Mamani, who had been organizing since the late 1930s, connecting the urban student activists with the peasant workers (Rivera, 1986, pp. 44-53).

Between 1942 and 1945 three indigenous congresses took place. In 1943, in the midst of this effervescence, Colonel Gualberto Villaroel became president through a military coup. There were deep social and political stirrings demanding changes and threatening the criollo oligarchy. Villaroel was acknowledged as a reformer and tried to maintain control over the situation and at the same time enacted many specific and symbolic measures to support indigenous peoples. For example, his government

sponsored the Indigenous Congress of 1945 and symbolically granted indigenous peoples the right to enter the main city plaza, historically off-limits to them.

In 1944 the military organization RADEPA or Razón de Patria (Reason of the Fatherland) and the MNR (National Revolutionary Movement), both in power supporting Villaroel, ordered ten members of the oligarchy shot as a “moralizing and purifying action”, which was the last straw for the criollo sectors of the population. The government tried to quell the rising movements in the countryside and the city to no avail. Finally, President Villaroel, the “father of the Indians”, was hanged by an urban mob in July of 1946 (Rivera, 1986).

Previous presidents such as Saavedra, Pando and Belzu had also been called “father” by the indigenous peoples, writes Silvia Rivera. There had been a slow rapprochement between government and indigenous peoples and perhaps that was why finally the moment had felt ripe, with doors wide open to dialogue and inclusion, as the MNR appeared on the political scene.

Between 1946 and the 1952 MNR Revolution, there had been multiple uprisings, in which even the founding of a school or a union was interpreted as a subversive act by the successive governments and quelled. Rivera explains that in the areas where there was more worker-driven, union activity there was more room for negotiation between political activists and hacienda owners. This was the case in the Quechua-speaking valleys of Cochabamba, where there was traditionally less ethnic friction.

On the other hand, in the highlands, of La Paz and Potosí, the unrest had a more ethnic tinge. Existing ethnic tension generated clashes, sieges and general panic on the

part of the hacienda owners, many of whom, at the threatening sound of the indigenous people's *pututus* (hollowed-out horns of bulls) and the sight of hundreds of campfires at night, fled for their lives. Some owners were hunted down and killed. Troops were sent out with planes and indigenous peoples were shot, jailed, and exiled by the hundreds. Again, in the prison cells, Indians, political activists, and MNR party members came together in political discussions. Two more indigenous congresses, which began to contain some nationalistic content, were celebrated in secret. However, the connection between the MNR political party and the Indians remained uncertain. While the MNR made crucial reforms including full citizenship rights for indigenous peoples, education and a partial Agrarian Reform, it also sought to create a homogeneous country of *mestizos*, a consumer middle class and an internal market, none of which addressed the indigenous demands of that time⁵ (Rivera, S. 1986, pp. 53-57 and 63).

1952: the concept of “the Indian” disappears and “the peasant” is created

Using 1950 Census data, George Gray Molina points out the inequalities in the possession of land before the 1952 Revolution: “8% of the largest landholders (7000 property owners with 500 or more hectares of land each) owned 95% of the available land, while 69% of the smallest landholders (60,000 peasants with 10 or fewer hectares) owned only 0.4% of available land” (Gray Molina, 2005, p. 8).

The revolution of April 9, 1952 was an important milestone for the country and specifically for the indigenous people of the highlands and valleys (Fig. 4). The government enacted three key reforms: an Agrarian reform through which most highland

haciendas were redistributed to the Indians as individual plots (and which soon generated new demographic pressures); a reform towards universal education; and a reform of the



Figure 4. Two cultures meet in La Paz, 1950s (Enciclopedia de Bolivia, 2006, p. 524).

electoral system, which expanded the electorate from 200,000 to over one million (Grindle, 2003, p. 3). The concept of “citizenship” was redefined to allow indigenous people to vote (p. 119), to a large degree because that would keep the MNR party, who took credit for the revolution, in power.

However, these reforms turned out to be temporary solutions that only diverted further protest for a few years (Rivera, 1986, p. 20) because the criollo and mestizo elites continued to exert hegemonic and therefore exclusionary control of the country. Several steps were taken to dilute the strength of indigenous voices. The first was the “disappearance of the Indian”, as Silvia Rivera writes in 1983, brought about through the creation of the class-based concept “peasant” in its place, and second was the adoption of the discourse of *mestizaje* and inclusive citizenship. The result of this discourse was that

it maintained the “harmony of inequalities” (term coined by Bautista Saavedra, 1917; in Gray Molina, 2005) without addressing the gross inequalities underlying the status quo. These two measures followed the redistribution of land and the creation of unions in the countryside, which were put in place in an effort to integrate the country. In different regions the unions were created on top of the existing ayllu structures or coexisted with them.

New forums and new political actors

After the 1952 Revolution, with the increasing rural migration of families to the city of La Paz seeking to better their lives and benefit from formal education, the schools and the University of La Paz received increasing numbers of Indian students. Many Aymara movements were founded in that period: Chitakolla, Mink’a, Qhantati, *Centro Pუსisuyu* and the Center for Peasant High School Students (Stephenson, 2002, p. 102). Two others were the MUJA, Movimiento Universitario Julián Apaza, and the Movimiento 15 de Noviembre, which was created by Aymara students of the Aroma province of the department of La Paz (Rivera, 1986, p. 120).

All of these movements and Indian parties with diverse political agendas⁶ were organized by Aymara activists in the 1960s and were the inspiration of what would become the powerful Katarista movement, which since then has tied the rural and urban strands of activism together under indigenous lines (Rivera, 1986, p. 120, 121). The THOA would initiate its project to “decolonize Aymara history”, perform research, publish their findings in popular formats, generate soap-operas with Aymara heroes, and

finally, stimulate the reorganization of the ayllus of the highlands, in what later became the Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu, CONAMAQ (National Council of Ayllus and Markas of the Qullasuyu [Qullasuyu: name of the ancient Aymara nation in Incan times]).

The Katarista movement fostered the defense of the Aymara identity as such. This movement formed intellectual and political indigenous leaders who would bring about the ethnic politization of Bolivia in the late 1960s and 1970s. This is what Marcia Stephenson calls the “counter-public sphere”, where indigenous people could come together to redefine their history and identity and to plan future actions (Stephenson, 2002, p. 102).

The Indianist movements continued to rise during the 1970s, following the teachings of Aymara intellectuals such as Fausto Reinaga, who founded his Partido Indio in 1966. A now famous *Manifiesto* (document of principles) was put together in Tiwanaku (ancient pre-Incan and pre-Aymara site in the Department of La Paz) in 1973, after a week of discussions about aspects of education, cultural values, language, politics, economy, and identity. It was signed by the following Katarista political activist groups: Union Puma de Defensa Aymara, the Centro de Promoción y Coordinación Campesina Mink’a, the Centro Campesino Tupak Katari, the Asociación de Estudiantes Campesinos de Bolivia, and the Asociación Nacional de Profesores Campesinos de Bolivia (Rivera, 1986, p. 177-186). Indianist political parties were founded soon after, honoring the *Manifiesto* precepts.⁷

The vast urban-based Aymara worker and peasant unions so favored by the MNR were also torn by internal conflict in the 1970s. As Johanna Strobele-Gregor writes, there was clearly ethnic and social heterogeneity among the indigenous population, a diversity of political expressions and organizational interests. Leftist politics brought in ideas of class consciousness and industrialization that clashed with the realities of indigenous lives and their loyalty to the *ayllu* principles and organizational formats. An example of this, according to Johanna Strobele-Gregor, is the time when Jenaro Flores, an important Aymara leader, was forced to resign from the Central Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia, CSUTCB (Central Union of Peasant Workers of Bolivia) due to ideological differences. He left his high profile urban union post and returned to his highland rural *ayllu*-community of origin to fulfill the traditional duties of *jilakata* (authority) in his *ayllu*. Strobele-Gregor believes that Jenaro Flores exemplifies the tensions between leftist and Indianist principles: these were two worlds, expressed in two different forms of leadership, that of the union and that of the *ayllu*, which were not compatible with each other (Strobele-Gregor, 1996, p. 73, 74).

The CSUTCB, founded in 1976, declared that in their meetings only Aymara and Quechua would be spoken and that the leftist union formats were no longer useful to them:

...the union fight only has served us so we could co-exist within the system of the Republic. We have not used it as a goal in itself, but as a temporary form of struggle. In that sense, the union struggle is making us fall asleep, it tries to “civilize” us so we are the same as the ‘*q’aras*’ [...] This is not just to change our name or our clothes [...] or to reform the union and the community like the political parties would like, but to recover our own ways of living and thinking

within the Ayllu-Marka, the Tenta-Tekoa, as we used to organize in the Andes, the Eastern Lowlands and the Chaco. (CSUTCB website, 2007, p. 7)

Marcia Stephenson describes how in 1987 and 1988 two Federations of Ayllus formed, first in the south of the department of Oruro and the north of the department of Potosí; then the Ayllus of Ingavi, of the Muñecas province, of Umala, Achacachi, and Pacajes in La Paz (Stephenson, 2002, p. 112).

Aymara movements centered on cultural values and identity gained momentum in La Paz and more so in El Alto⁸, a city contiguous to La Paz, during the 1980s and 1990s, as the left went into decline and neoliberal reforms and globalization were pushed to the forefront.

In the early 1980s a prolonged drought caused networks of relief workers to be brought in from local and foreign NGOS, who intensified their development work and discourse in the rural areas. International Monetary Fund adjustment programs were applied in an attempt to jump-start the economy, in what Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson call the “free-market shock treatment” (2004, pp. 15-19). In that same period the economy was floundering under unmanageable international debt payments and hyperinflation. In order to resolve this situation, the same architects of the 1952 Revolution started paving the way for neoliberal reforms and, with the opposition at bay, the country underwent a period of shallow political democracy, with a growing right-wing and conservative monopoly of the media.

After the collapse of tin prices in the international market numerous major public enterprises were shut down, including the Corporación Minera de Bolivia, COMIBOL,

(Bolivian Mining Corporation), with the firing of 40,000 miners. There was widespread unemployment and in order to feed their families the ex-state employees and ex-miners worked in cottage industries and sold imported or contraband goods on the streets. For months, many miners “crucified” themselves in public places such as the University of San Andrés in La Paz, tying themselves to tall wooden crosses to demand the attention of the government to their desperate situation. Small, blue plastic tents sprang up around the major cities and towns where the homeless miners lived with their families. Many headed to the Chapare region of Cochabamba and become coca farmers.

The “coca wars” have been ongoing with brief intervals since the 1980s; growers defend their right to grow this traditional crop and the United States government, wary of the coca-cocaine connection, threatened to cut aid to Bolivia if production is not eradicated, mainly in the Chapare region.⁹

The 1990s: the indigenous movements gain strength

In October of 1990 a group of 800 indigenous men, women, and children from different regions of the Amazon organized by the Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas del Oriente Boliviano, CIDOB, (Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of the Bolivian East) walked more than 700 kms. in 34 days, from the Southeastern region of Beni to the city of La Paz, to demand the enforcement of their territorial rights against the assault of the logging companies (García Linera et al, 2004, p. 218). Marcia Stephenson writes that when the marchers arrived to the *cumbre*, or mountain pass high above La Paz, emotions were running high as they were received by thousands of Aymara, Quechua and non-

indigenous people: “The coming together of the fragmented indigenous body – an earth-shaking union, from the depths of time and space – seemed to be taking place, or at least that is how the majority of those present perceived it, like a *pachakuti*, a cosmic shift that again shattered the clear sky of linear time” (Stephenson, 2002, p. 102 and Rivera, 1993, p. 53).

The reference to a fragmented indigenous body originated in the capture and quartering of the Aymara rebel leader Tupac Katari, on November 27th, 1781. During what Sinclair Thomson calls “the era of insurgence”, Tupac Katari led an Aymara army and held a siege lasting several months on the city of La Paz. To set an example, the Spanish sent his head and each of his arms and legs to the different regions where he had been most active (Thomson, 2006, pp. 19-25). Since then, indigenous people have said that when Tupac Katari’s body is reunited under the surface of the earth, the hegemonies will shift in a massive *pachakuti*, a cataclysmic change or revolution in time and space (Montes, 1999, p. 453).

The year 1992 “marked a watershed”; a translational indigenous movement celebrated five hundred years of resistance to colonialism and in Bolivia the Assembly of Nationalities was founded (Stephenson, 2002, p. 112).

In 1993, Victor Hugo Cárdenas, a Katarista, became vice-president of Bolivia and the first indigenous person on the continent to become a member of the Government, “through a route that combined resistance and concertation” (Montes, 1999, p. 357). Although he made contributions to the indigenous peoples through his support to the national Educational Reform and the INRA laws in support of the territorial claims of the

peoples of the Amazon and the laws of Popular Participation, some feel that his alliance with a president of the MNR party made indigenous issues subaltern to issues of neo-liberal reforms that President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada favored.

Alternate discourses in the making

Since the year 2000, people have been involved in politics in a different way, writes Alvaro García Linera, sociologist and vice-president of the current indigenous government of Evo Morales. Some examples are: the “water war” of Cochabamba from February to April 2000 in which many segments of society fought the rising water prices imposed by the French company Bechtel, and the October 2003 “gas war” in which varied sectors of the population rose in great numbers to protest the exportation of natural gas at inappropriately low prices and unfair conditions, detrimental to Bolivia.

Thirty or forty years ago, the new political actors rallied around the workplace and the workers’ unions; in recent years, the new political actors have organized around the indigenous and peasant organizations. The regular channels for political deliberation have broadened to the council and the assembly, García Linera notes, and to the agrarian unions, the worker unions, the ayllu, the communities, the urban neighborhoods. The Councils, Confederations, Federations, Movements, and the centralizing and coordinating organisms of different indigenous and social groups

...have been projected as political systems, complementary or alternate, capable of achieving in a more efficient and democratic way than the political parties and the liberal system of representation, the aggregation of wills, the construction of consensus, using as a basis the collective production of opinion and the

accountability of the electors over the elected, which now exist as a deliberating collective and not only as powerless individuals with no public voice or effective will. (García Linera, 2004, p. 19)

All of these groups came together with sectors of the urban middle class in December of 2005 to elect the first indigenous Bolivian president.

Evo Morales Ayma, chief of the MAS party, was elected president in December of 2005, by 54% of the vote. Although he was not the main promoter of indigenous rights at that time, he won over Felipe Quispe, a much more radical candidate, because of Morales' perceived capacity to "articulate" different sectors of voters and specifically to unite the leftist parties with the indigenous movements and the middle class. Morales' victory was unprecedented because Bolivia has a multiparty system and except for the MNR in the 1950s, no political parties had ever achieved more than 36% of the vote.

Bolivian Anthropologist Ricardo Calla declared in an interview a few months after Morales' election:

This could be [...] a new form of indigenous thinking within the framework of a developing "community pluralism", where [...] indigeneity brings together unions, parties, the State and the masses of Indian organizations. The strategies that are coming together now propose ideological lines, as occurred in Ecuador, but in that country there was no political leadership with the strength of the Bolivian electorate. Without saying it is unique, the Bolivian process is rare because of the masses it has at its base. (Calla interviewed by Gómez Balboa, *La Prensa*, 2006, pp. 7, 8)

The Constitutional Assembly, elected to rewrite the National Constitution, had been a banner of the indigenous people since the 1990s. Now indigenous peoples of the

country are applying pressure so that the Assembly appropriately addresses their demands. The MAS party wants to make very strong statements to win indigenous peoples' approval, yet it also needs the votes of the middle classes to have these new laws approved. This situation signals that electing Evo Morales to the presidency was only the first step. If the 1990s, with the March for Territory and Dignity of the lowland indigenous groups to La Paz, implied a joining together in a common indigenous quest between lowland and highland Indian peoples, the decade that started in the year 2000 is one of indigenous forces vying for real agency on the political stages of Bolivia, in the neighborhoods, on the streets and in the formal institutions of government.

Organizations such as the CAUP now have more access to government organizations and are starting to contribute to build alternate discourses, laws and institutions (on the issues of alternate views of health and health services and laws regulating senior rights in general). Now both government institutions and nongovernmental organizations are interested in tapping the CAUP's experience in the construction of an urban community upon the basis of a rural habitus of *ayllu*-community, which has worked to achieve dignity, agency, and empowerment for its members.

Endnotes:

¹ *Criollos*: the sons and daughters of the Spaniards, born on American soil.

² *Mestizo*: of mixed Spanish and indigenous origin.

³ "Internal colonialism" – term which describes the unequal colonial relationships reproduced in postcolonial societies, this time between criollos and indigenous peoples.

⁴ *Q'ara* means *pelado*, “raw”, “skinless” or “sterile”. “Q'ara” is, like “Indian”, an ideological term, writes Mercedes Zerda (1997, p. 37), a pejorative term with social and cultural connotations, which is used more in private, to designate a white or *mestizo* person who has more access to formal education, is financially better off and has an overbearing demeanor. Conversely, as Mercedes Zerda also adds, “Indian” is a term which has been used until recently more in private or in a pejorative way and designates someone with little access to formal Western education, who is financially poor and who lives according to native customs and beliefs (1997, p. 37).

⁵ See Rivera (1986), Chapter III, *El movimiento campesino-indio en la posguerra del Chaco*, pp. 43-54; and Chapter IV, *El ciclo rebelde de 1947*, pp. 55-63.

⁶ See Chapter 1, *Espacios de Representación Indianista*, in Pacheco, 1992.

⁷ For a chronological overview see Pacheco (1992, pp. 335-344).

⁸ According to the 2001 census, 82% of El Alto self-identifies as indigenous. El Alto is located on the highland plateau, at approximately 13,000 feet, has an estimated one million inhabitants, and until 1985, when it gained administrative autonomy, was considered to be part of the city of La Paz. A high percentage of the El Alto population has recently migrated to the city. 7.5% of the population of El Alto is above the poverty level. The people of El Alto are well known in Bolivia for being highly organized in unions, federations, neighborhood organizations (there are 562 neighborhood associations), and student organizations. It was the site of the “gas wars” in October of 2003 when 70 people died. The national airport, an Air Force base, and the University of El Alto are located there. El Alto is full of commercial and economic activity, with small businesses, street markets and factories. There are also vast bi-weekly fairs where everything, new and used, from machinery and cars, to clothes and food, are sold. (Ciudad de El Alto website, 2007)

⁹ See Arze and Kruse, *The Consequences of Neo-liberal Reform*, pp. 23-28 and Farthing and Ledebur, *The Beat Goes on: The U.S. War on Coca*, pp. 34-39, both in *Nacla Report on the Americas*, 2004.

CHAPTER III

THE CAUP: HOW THEY STARTED, WHO THEY ARE TODAY

The organization now known as CAUP began 25 years ago, with a group of migrant Aymara women that had arrived to the neighborhood of Pampajasi (Fig. 5) from the countryside or moved there from other urban neighborhoods. They had small



Figure 5. View of La Paz from Pampajasi, 1980s (Martensson).

children, did not speak Spanish, had few or no services and barely had enough means to get by. Jobs were scarce and families needed more income to make ends meet. They were discriminated against because they were indigenous people, because they were migrants, because they were poor, and because they were women. So in the early 1980s a group of

these women started getting together on Saturday afternoons to talk about their problems and see what they could do to solve them. One of the CAUP Team members, Javier Chipana, a child in those first years, was raised in Machaq Uta, the Daycare, and is now music teacher and in charge of the cultural programs of CAUP. He describes the general context within which those first groups that would later be called “CAUP” started to organize:

In the 1960s, 1970s and 80s, the migration of people from the countryside and the provinces towards the city of La Paz that were mostly Aymaras, increased a great deal because of the lack of land or because they were seeking better opportunities for their future. Most of them were young; the women worked as domestic servants, itinerant salespeople or washerwomen; the men, on their part, worked mostly in construction or in other on-demand jobs that helped them earn a living. The *zona* of Pampajasi was one of most remote areas from what was then the center of the city. That was the beginning of our history. Perhaps our fathers and mothers were still babies or young people when they arrived to the *zona* of Pampajasi. In time, they created families, many of them, with scant economic resources. Then, a group of those women, young migrant Aymara mothers who had come to live in Pampajasi, needed a place to leave their children while they and their husbands worked. That is how this group of mothers started [...]. Supported by a couple of psychologists who had also come to live in Pampajasi, they founded, in the year 1982 [others say, 1983], a social group and a daycare that were unique among others. These psychologists always thought that the people themselves should manage their own material and economic resources, openly, where the management of the money was handled within the sight of all the participants, without holding their hands out [for charity] or always dependent on NGOS or their professionals; a system where the grassroots base is the head and not the tail, where everyone can decide, can contribute and also receive, not just a few.¹ (Chipana, quoted in Mendoza, 2006)

The names of the women that started organizing were Doña Fermina, Doña Francisca, Doña Julia, Doña Juana, Doña Angélica, Doña Paulina and Doña Lucía. They formed the first core group. In this period other groups formed for a brief period, then

dissolved. Sometimes their children also formed groups like *Amancaayita* and *Wara Wara*, to play music together, and these groups later dissolved or the participants moved on to do something else (Zerda, 1997, p. 198-190). *Warminakax Saranti* (Women who Move Forward) continued working together despite the obstacles and problems because they had bonded and had strong determination.

This core group of women joined other women from Pampajasi, first to learn how to read and write and then to develop a plan to raise pigs, slaughter them as they matured and then sell the meat, and also, pork dishes.

They received a private donation from a group of Swedish nurses who worked at one of the health facilities where these women received services, and who sympathized with their efforts. This venture lasted a few years and then due to excessive competition and an unfortunate mistake (a volunteer inoculated the baby pigs and most died), the pig farm operation had to close. The group had also started a Daycare, so after the collapse of the pig farm, they devoted their full effort to its further development. These women called themselves *Warminakax Saranti*, and were the seed of the groups that would soon follow, such as the *Machaq Uta*, *Awicha* groups and *Qulla Uta*, the Traditional Healing Center.

Strategic supporters who accompanied the process

Although more will be said about the process of strategic support in general in chapter VII, it is important to introduce two of these supporters in this section: Mercedes Zerda and Javier Mendoza. These two social community psychologists moved to

Pampajasi in the early 1980s in order to stay out of sight during the political repression in La Paz. They had already been working in the area and were interested in finding alternate ways to practice psychology.

The women of Pampajasi knew Mercedes and Javier as neighbors and some of the women had previously worked with them on a child literacy project with an NGO. Both Javier and Mercedes gave these women non-directive support while they developed their own self-administered project, which the group eventually operated and directed. Mercedes and Javier believed in the capacity of these women to self-organize and supported them by practicing social community psychology, which entailed becoming part of a community and accompanying their process, but not attempting to lead or guide it.

Mercedes wrote in her thesis about the early days and how these first women got started on one of their ventures, a daycare center: "One Saturday afternoon in December of 1983 five women knocked on our door and said, 'We need some help to create a Daycare. We can begin in January.' Mercedes, or Peti as she is better known, describes how with a borrowed room, a rug, borrowed dishes and pots, "and lots of motivation", the Daycare started functioning two months later, in February of the following year. All of the other later ventures started out in a similar way, planning as they went, with no lengthy preparations (Zerda, 1997, pp. 228, 229). CAUP continues today to be an organization largely made up of women: They comprise 70% of the adult membership of the CAUP to this day.

Union style or community style?

The first group of women who met together to begin the pig farm and the daycare chose the “community” format over the “union” format to organize because it was more suited to their needs and was more familiar to them. The “union” model of organization had been introduced in the countryside in the early 1950s by the nationalist government of the MNR, to organize and gain control of the population. Later it would become the main organizing tool for workers and peasants to confront the government. Many authors including Mendoza (1986), Rivera (1986), and Healy (2001) have written about the interweaving of the union and ayllu traditions. Union practices in the Andes have strong ayllu overtones, particularly at the grassroots levels in the countryside (Mendoza, 1986).²

However, the union system has several significant contrasts to the community format: It has been traditionally used by men, is inherently vertical and operates through a more overtly representational format than the ayllu, which is more horizontal and participatory. In the union system, women usually participate vicariously through their husbands. When they do attend meetings, they rarely speak.

Typically, union leaders are elected for long periods, personal charisma is valued and encouraged, and leaders have greater individual freedom to negotiate and decide. In fact, I was told in an interview with members of the CAUP team that the men, husbands and boyfriends of the original group of women that began organizing in Pampajasi, had advocated for the women to use the union model to organize. They said that so much horizontality and participation (found in the ayllu-community model) “made the women’s meetings sound like a chicken coop”.

The women felt less inclined to conform to the strictures and top-down ways of the union model and instead used the ayllu-community model, which was more participatory and allowed for greater equality, promoted the yearly rotating of authorities, more solidarity among members, more reciprocity, and which was in spirit, more akin to the practices with which women were familiar. This choice was not, however, the result of much debate and reflection; more so, a choice based on comfort and practicality. Mercedes Zerda writes that the women of Warminakax Saranti did not spend much time reflecting on how to organize, or planning their activities. They started getting together because they were friends and family and had common needs. She writes:

To begin, they just got started. They began with no project, no funding, no donation of supplies [...]. All of the projects of these grassroots organizations have been born more or less this way: first you begin, then you figure out what it is that you will need, then you try to get what you need, and through common effort, progress is made towards a rather short-term goal.³ (Zerda, 1997, p. 229)

But the time that was not taken up planning beforehand, was put into close oversight. From the very beginning, the group conducted informal evaluations and introduced changes until they discovered how things would work out to their best advantage. That is why each group has slightly different systems of operation. Mercedes recalls that at one point a group had seven treasurers, one for each kind of expense, some doing their public accounting in front of the group each week, some each month, and others in between, only to change in a few months to another system that worked better for them. Some of the groups sought some training, by learning how to read and write and how to do basic hands-on accounting. Following their intuitions and ideas of how

their organization should be, Doña Francisca, Doña Juana, Doña Angélica and the others generated a group where they all shared decision making and work and where they could all share leadership and agency, instead of the organizational resource of the union, traditionally more associated with male protagonism and with vertical lines of authority and more importantly, with official, urban and non-indigenous political representation.

This is an excerpt of an interview done with Doña Francisca Nina, which reflects how she felt about their autonomy and their capacity to self-manage. The interview was titled *Testimonio de una mujer aymara* and published by the Chitakolla newsletter in January, 1986 (No. 28, p. 7):

This group depends only on us. No one else. Other groups depend on institutions. The other groups fight all the time. We don't fight because we agree with each other. The others fight about their jobs because they don't have job equality. We all do the same things, all of us, the same. If we earn a little or a lot, it's all equal. If some of us earned more and others less, we would also fight. We are all equal. Other groups don't manage their money and that's another reason why they can't get ahead. They don't manage their own money. They have bosses and the boss administers their money. In this group, we manage our own money. We know how much we have and that way we can save.⁴

The ayllu-community format which was part of the habitus of this first group of women would eventually provide an organizational grid and norms for their social interaction.

Gender relations within the CAUP

As was mentioned in Chapter II, according to Andean precepts everything in the Andean world is either male or female. Men and women are each considered half of a social unit, different but complementary and indispensable.

This is how one young man from the CAUP describes men and women's roles in the CAUP:

Women are [...] very important [...] within our native cultures, but so are the men, because both complement each other in nature. That is why we say *chacha-warmi* (man-woman in Aymara), which means that everything in nature has its pair or complement [...]: female stones and male stones, female and male plants, even musical instruments are female and male. It is the same thing in a community. For a better organization and participation both men and women must participate. Actually, women are the spiritual complement of men and men are the material complement of women. In this way both are the nucleus of the family and therefore of society. Women's roles in CAUP have opened many doors for us [...] We have awichas [grandmas], mothers, housewives, university students, professionals, female schoolchildren, little girls; women are everywhere, and [they contribute] through their ideas, opinions, criticism, advice, projects...⁵

According to Spanish documentation and court records, Aymara and Quechua women not only participated, they governed their own ayllus; but under the Spanish rule of law their authority was revoked in favor of their husbands'. Not only were women stripped of their rights to be political and religious heads under Spanish law, but they were also sometimes offered up by the men in their families in exchange for favors from the Spanish priests and authorities (Silverblatt, 2005, pp. 376-383).

Most authors consider that the modern rural ayllus have maintained their ideal of equality between the sexes but it has taken another form. In matters of work in the

countryside, such as the building of a house or the stewardship of the land, tasks are assigned on the basis of sex but performed in an integrated way and roughly equivalent. (For a detailed description of men's and women's roles, see Carter & Mamani, 1989, pp. 122-131).

Although in the rural areas there are community resources that women and their families can appeal to in cases of domestic violence, women's grievances are often considered part of a woman's lot in life. Although men and women are considered equal, men are considered "first among equals" and women, symbolically and in reality, the secondary half of the social and symbolic whole. CAUP members agreed that domestic violence is more prevalent in the urban areas.

More than 60% of the urban population and 80% of the rural population of Bolivia lives under the poverty line. Survival demands that both women and men be resourceful and hardworking and both qualities are valued in men and women. However, women suffer poverty more acutely because it seems more natural for women to do without. In the city, besides giving birth to the children and being entrusted with their day-to-day care and the care of the elderly members of the family, they usually contribute to the family income, or are the sole providers.

Since the late 1970s there has been increased awareness that statistics on urban and rural poverty usually do not reflect how differently men and women experience it. Studies show that women have less access than men to opportunities, resources, schooling and equal employment and that they tend to suffer from inequalities within the family which limit their decision making power in general and specifically regarding

their own lives, their time and how money should be spent. Their unequal status is often invisible and results in inadequate responses to women's specific needs. (CEPAL-UNIFEM website, 2004). Indicators more suitable to the realities of Bolivia have yet to be developed (Arnold & Spedding, 2005, p. 105).

At the state level, despite the fact that women represent more than 50% of the voters and that there are laws which obligate political parties to have at least 30% of female participation, women occupy less than 15% of the posts of mayors, deputies and senators (CEPAL, 1999).

Although the CAUP today is primarily composed of women, it is not exclusively a women's organization. The membership of the CAUP includes males of different ages, primarily elderly men and boys. Leadership is rotational and therefore sometimes occupied by a man. However, women have more protagonism than in regular urban society.

In the CAUP, although men and women usually sit separately in the meetings and stand or sit separately when outdoors, there is a lot of interaction going on between them. Either the conversation is "strictly business" or there is a lot of bantering going on, back and forth. There are jokes and flirting going on, most visibly within the Awicha groups. Women are expected to be quick-witted and everyone is attentive to see who makes a better response.

When asked about the roles of men and women within the organization the members of the CAUP consistently responded, "we all do the same things", "we are all the same", "men and women do the same work". Depending on the cultural origin of the

observer, this statement would seem more or less idealistic, but CAUP members assured me it was so.

What I observed was that the women in the Awicha groups seemed to speak up more, be more assertive and relaxed, than in society at large. The observance of gender roles and activities seemed to be similar to that of the rest of society, but with more strictly prescribed activities and attitudes per gender as is customary in the countryside, and with more respect towards the women than is usually observed in urban society and in urban Aymara society. More specific study on gender realities at home would surely reveal more on this topic, but within the CAUP I observed that members achieved a relationship of more conscious equivalency between men and women, while still maintaining clearly differentiated roles. The women do most of the cooking, sewing, housework, raising of the children, organizing of the festivities, celebrations, the rituals of passage and family get-togethers, although the men participate and even preside over them and the wishes and opinions of the men still tend to carry more weight than those of the women. However, women can typically “get their way” working around the men in subtle ways. A very strong tool for the women in this respect is humor. I also noticed that women often prefer to portray themselves as strong and resourceful, and that they downplay their difficulties, unless they are specifically talking to someone who is sympathetic.

The CAUP was started through the initiative of a small group of women and continues to be mostly women, but was not intended to be a “women only” organization. Its membership comes from the low-income families that live in Pampajasi and that had

the need, the availability and the interest in participating in a self-managed, ayllu-community style organization to resolve their child, senior and health care.

The women and the men of the CAUP community have a long history of organizing, planning, and decision making together which has paved the way to their present work. The women of the CAUP are not the “silent half” in the sense that they need their husbands and brothers to speak on their behalf. They continue to show deference for the men in their group, but now have more experience and confidence in themselves. A more laid back demeanor is considered appropriate among both men and women during the meetings and those with strong outgoing personalities are encouraged to only speak up when it is their turn. Outside of the meetings, however, is a different situation: there is a lot of talking, playfulness and jokes.

Timeline: when different CAUP programs and components were created

The information for Table 2 was taken from Mercedes Zerda’s thesis (1997, p. 174) and contains information about the years in which different organized groups originated and the purpose for which they were created. These are the groups that later became organized under the umbrella organization now known as CAUP. Table 3 includes the new groups that have formed since 1997. The programs and groups that no longer exist have been marked with an asterisk.

Table 2. History of the CAUP groups and programs

NAME OF THE GROUP	YEAR IT WAS CREATED	CHARACTERISTICS	ORIGINAL PURPOSE	ACTIVITY (As reported in 1997)
Warminakax Saranti *	1983	Aymara women, 1 st generation migrants	Pig farm	Animal husbandry
Wiñayataki *	1983	Youngsters, 2 nd generation migrants	Cultural activity	Construction of living quarters
Childcare center Machaq Uta	1984	Aymara mothers and fathers: 1 st and 2 nd generation migrants Children and teens: 2 nd and 3 rd generation migrants	Daycare	Child and youth center. Workshops
Bolivian Volunteers * **	1985	Technicians and professionals	Support to the groups	Support to the groups
Awicha community of senior citizens	Urban groups: 1986-2002. Rural groups: 2001 and 2002	Currently six Aymara and Quechua senior citizens groups and four in the countryside, urban groups mostly 1 st and 2 nd Aymara migrants	Spinning of alpaca wool	Living quarters, kitchen and dining room, knitting, theater, dancing and music
Machaq Uta craft cooperative	1993	1 st and 2 nd generation migrant Aymara women	Knitted goods	Knitting and exporting knitted goods
Center for healing and spirituality Qulla Uta	1995	1 st and 2 nd generation Aymara migrants	Traditional clinic and herb store	Traditional clinic and herb store
Living quarters cooperative	1995	1 st and 2 nd generation of mostly Aymara migrants	Construction of living quarters of social interest	Construction of low-income living quarters
Jugo de Piedra * ***	1996	Teens of 2 nd and 3 rd generation	Cultural activity	Cultural activity

* Groups that no longer exist.

** Mercedes Zerda and Javier Mendoza supported the CAUP groups free of charge since 1983. In 1986, through the advocacy of a group of Swedish volunteers, the group “Bolivian Volunteers” was created, to seek funds to cover the technical and professional expenses for them and for other volunteers who had been working with the grassroots members of the CAUP.

*** They no longer exist as a musical group within Machaq Uta, but “the Jugos”, now adults, still come to visit, consider themselves a group and recently have come to help in Machaq Uta as volunteers.

Table 3. Groups and programs of the CAUP created since 1997

Name of the Group	Year it was created	Characteristics	Original purpose	Activities
CAUP TEAM	Informally 1999; formally 2002	1 st and 2 nd generation Aymara migrants	Development of bylaws for CAUP	Coordination activities
Tajpachani (All of us together)	2003	1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd generation Aymara seniors and teens	Multigenerational cultural activity, Awichas and children	Cultural activity
Machaq Amptati (New Thinking)	2005	Teens of 2 nd and 3rd generation	Cultural activity	Cultural activity
Children’s music group, no name	No date	Children of 2nd and 3rd generation	Cultural activity	Cultural activity
Awicha music group, no name	No date	1st and 2nd generation mostly Aymara migrants	Cultural activity	Cultural activity

The primary components of modern-day CAUP

Machaq Uta, the Daycare

The first core group that got together in 1983 called themselves *Warminakax Saranti*, Women Who Move Forward. As described earlier, they first started a pig farm

and soon after, in 1984, they started the Daycare because they needed a safe place to leave their children while they went to work. The Daycare was named Machaq Uta, which means “new house” in Aymara.

The mothers wanted the Daycare to include meals for the children and for a few years they applied for supplies such as rice, flour, and oil which were available through government agencies and foreign aid because of massive drought on the highlands. In those days, the mothers themselves cared for the children in a borrowed room by taking turns. They contributed a few vegetables and meat with which they made soup for the children. The Daycare later acquired funds to buy a piece of property with a few rooms on it and with money from the Canadian Embassy, they built a few walls, changed the tin roof, changed the doors and cemented the patio. This was the original Daycare facility, which they outgrew after a few years. (Fig. 6)



Figure 6. Machaq Uta’s first daycare site, 1980s (Martensson).

A few years later, in the early 1990s, the group received responses to their requests for funding for a larger Daycare facility. They received financing from several sources: A group of Bolivians in Gotemburg, Sweden sent them money for the bricks, another group sent them money for cement, another for the doors and windows and finally, the Bolivian government gave them money for tin roofing through an organization called CORDEPAZ, the Corporation for the Development of La Paz, which no longer exists. The work was slow and much of it was done by the women themselves and by their husbands. Other parts were contracted out to professional construction workers. This was an enormous undertaking. Most of the women did not read or write to keep track of the expenses, so they devised systems where money was physically set aside for each expense and the mothers themselves oversaw each step of the process.

They left their old quarters, which are now an Awicha house, as soon as they were able to move into the new facility. This new Machaq Uta daycare facility (Fig. 7)

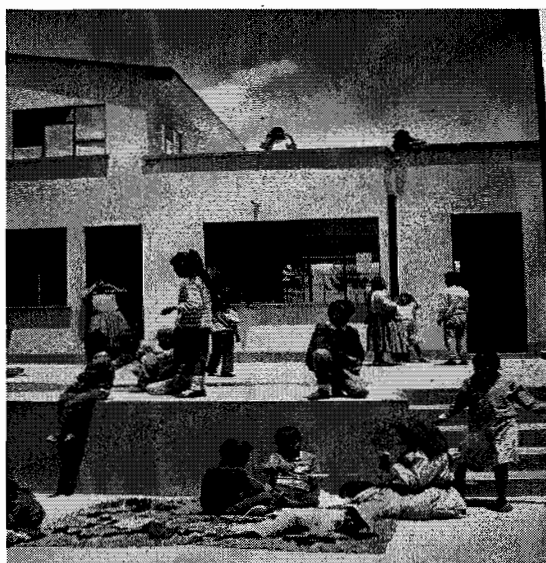


Figure 7. Machaq Uta's new facility, 1990s (Martensson).

includes a large cemented patio and several smaller and larger environments on two stories where children from 8 months to 18 years of age spent - and others still spend - many hours a day doing educational and cultural activities with their caretakers, who are mothers themselves and who the children call "aunts". (The caretakers are called "tías", (aunts) by the children. A few years ago a tío (uncle) was also incorporated.)

Today, between seventy and eighty children attend Machaq Uta daily. Some are there all day, from roughly 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., others only half day. Mothers contribute to support Machaq Uta by paying a variable stipend according to their means. This monthly stipend ranges between 20 and 80 Bs (between about \$2.50 and \$10.00 a month, at an exchange rate of approximately eight *pesos Bolivianos* per American dollar) and, according to the amount paid in, mothers are also expected to contribute more or less communal work for the Center. Some mothers take monthly turns cooking meals for which they are paid a small salary or take turns baking bread for the children's meals, for which they receive some tuition credit. Others, currently about 15 in number, spin alpaca wool and knit sweaters, ponchos, leg warmers, scarves, and other items, for which they are also paid. The income generated from sales abroad, mostly in Sweden, also contributes to support the Machaq Uta.

The services that Machaq Uta offers benefit mostly low-income working mothers, many of whom are heads of household, and their children. Three of the four caretakers are women and all earn equal salaries for their work. Women also do the knitting and spinning in the income-generating groups of Machaq Uta and they are the ones who apply to take the monthly cooking jobs.

Because Machaq Uta was created and is managed by urban Aymara mothers of Pampajasi, it is different from privately owned, charity based or NGO run daycares: the decision making and management is in their hands. Members share a sense of autonomy and independence. As Silvia, one of the moms in charge of the caretaking says, “We decide in a general meeting what we want for the children and how we want to do it. In other places, people are limited by what their funders will accept or by what the owners want.”

Most Machaq Uta mothers I talked to are familiar with other daycare facilities in the neighborhood and how they operate because, at some point, they have taken their children, nieces or nephews there. In general, Machaq Uta moms said, “They are very strict with the parents and with the children.” The atmosphere is one of tight management and control. Parents also have to be present for meetings and to contribute with work, but know little about how the organization is managed or what happens with their children behind closed doors.

The other large daycare in Pampajasi charges only a little more than Machaq Uta, but they are heavily subsidized by donor funding which pays for personnel to teach, cook, do the accounting and oversee the organization. Their programs, timetables and schedules are proposed and approved by their German donor agency.

Conversely, the Machaq Uta members are the owners of their facility which they self-manage and they are more relaxed about programming and schedules. They choose a four- member *directiva* (board) every year among themselves and hold weekly meetings to report on the meals, inventories and expenses, to discuss the content of the children’s

programs, to coordinate for the following week, to share news about the children and to open the floor for discussion on any topic, including their own performances, related to the children and the management of the Machaq Uta. Machaq Uta, I was told by the moms themselves, is where the poorest mothers, the single mothers who are head of families, bring their children to receive care, meals, and instruction. Because there are more women in Machaq Uta and leadership is rotational, women are more frequently on the Board, or *directiva*. Each woman's leadership is respected, whatever her age or marital status, because she is fulfilling, with no pay, an obligation towards her community.

The children vary in age. There is a group of babies, between eight months and three years of age, a group of older children, between three and five years of age and groups of older children starting from six years of age to eighteen. The older children get together to do their homework in the mornings or the afternoons and to play. The children under six are both girls and boys in equal numbers and there are more boys than girls among the children six to eighteen, at the present time. The *tio* that helps the older children out with their homework also takes them on outings to parks and to nearby sites in the countryside, has helped them organize a soccer tournament and coaches their team, watches videos with them and takes them to games. He and all of the other teachers are from Pampajasi. The CAUP Team will be more fully described towards the end of this chapter.

Awicha, the Senior Centers

Another component of the CAUP is *Awicha* (Fig. 8), which is the name (meaning “grandma” in Aymara) given to six urban groups (three urban groups residing in



Figure 8. One of the *Awicha* facilities, the “Green House” (CAUP Archives).

Pampajasi, one in Senkata, El Alto and one each in nearby Kupini and nearby San Antonio) of women and men over the age of sixty, who either live together communally or attend weekly meetings, according to the possibilities and characteristics of each group and the needs of each individual. There are another four groups in the countryside, in the Lake Titicaca area, which the CAUP Team visits every two weeks and with whom activities are more loosely coordinated.

Several CAUP members told me that in the beginning there were no *Awicha* groups. A few of the Daycare children showed up one day, leading by the hand, a very old woman they had found on the streets. They took her to the Daycare so she could eat and rest. It was this woman and others like her, who together formed the very first

Pampajasi Awicha group. They started meeting regularly, albeit in the open air, about 23 years ago and the most recently developed group has just celebrated their third anniversary. There are currently about 150 men and women in the six urban groups. All of the groups have developed some group economic strategies to support their activities. Some men and women in the groups also spin alpaca wool and knit shawls, scarves, and ponchos, which are shipped abroad and provide the group with extra income to support their groups. Among the economic strategies they have developed in each group are the weekly baking of bread to sell; the making of *kispiñas* which are small quinoa cookies; the recycling of plastic bottles, etc. Each member of the group also makes a weekly monetary contribution to the petty cash box of the group of about 50 centavos to one peso (approximately six cents to 12 cents of a U.S. dollar). The groups have done different things with this money and this allows them a sense of freedom and empowerment as they can spend as the group chooses.

The Awicha groups are visited weekly by a CAUP Team member, who is a Pampajasi resident. She assists in facilitating meetings, helping to smooth over difficulties, picking up and distributing the alpaca wool or the finished products and acting as a liaison with the other groups. Another CAUP Team member is a music teacher, who visits the groups every week and coaxes the Awicha musicians to remember old tunes and their words and to play, sing along and dance. This teacher is an important resource for the yearly music and dance festivals and also works with the children, the preteens and teens at Machaq Uta every week.

When I asked why the urban Awicha groups were primarily composed of women, this was Mercedes' response:

In most of the senior citizen groups in the urban areas of Bolivia, most of the members are women, always more than 90%, because in the urban culture senior citizen groups are "women's business", to knit, embroider and dance and the men, even though they're retired, feel they are destined to more exalted things. Therefore, there is a gender imbalance against the men, because they stay home by themselves. In contrast, men comprise 30% of the Awicha group membership because the system of organization is like in the rural areas, where there is no gender imbalance in participation. Therefore, the percentage of men is lower only because there are more widows than widowers; in the rural area the couples live together, but since the man dies sooner, the senior woman is left alone and their children bring her to the city.⁶

As in Machaq Uta, there are more women in the urban Awicha groups and therefore women are more frequently the presidents of their groups. Women participate fully and unabashedly in the decision making. But when it is their turn to be president of their group or a member of the *Directiva* or Board, they usually feel trepidation. They are helped in their learning process by the President and the *Directiva* that is stepping down and are respected because they are complying with an obligation towards the group. Once their one year term is over, they have acquired a greater sense of ownership and knowledge about administration and leadership.

The rural groups of the CAUP are more intergenerational, as rural ayllu-communities would naturally be. They include children and have more men. The younger adult men and women often migrate to the city.

Qulla Uta, the Center for Traditional Medicine and Spirituality

The third component of CAUP is Qulla Uta, which began its work in 1985. Before that, the yatiri (traditional and spiritual healer) don Carlos Yujra, more often called Don Mario, worked alone, itinerantly. He later set up a small practice in the first Awicha house. A few years later Qulla Uta was founded and moved to its own rented office.

The work of Qulla Uta (Center for Traditional Medicine and Spirituality) (Fig. 9) revolves around the work of 2 yatiris, and a qulliri (or healer who cures mostly with



Figure 9. Sign at the doorway of Qulla Uta (CAUP archives).

herbs but does not incorporate the ritual aspect into her healing) and two support people who have translated yatiri Don Carlos Yujra's first book on Aymara cosmovision. An Awicha member is also part of the Qulla Uta Team. Her responsibilities include selling ritual herbs and incense and she is a continual presence there.

Qulla Uta offers healing services and also sells medicine and ritual materials to the public in general and looks after the Awicha and Machaq Uta group members in particular. The qulliri's services are available to the general public and she visits the Awicha groups weekly and provides them with general checkups and medications. The yatiris receive patients in their office or visit them on request, sometimes traveling to communities hours distant to perform rituals and healing.

Qulla Uta is different from Machaq Uta and the Awicha groups in that it has a small staff and it serves populations both inside and outside of the CAUP membership. Most of the patients of Qulla Uta are the low income women, the children and the elderly men and women of the neighborhood. The public rituals of inauguration or the blessings performed throughout the year by the yatiris for unions, political parties and organizations benefit their members which are adult men and women. The house blessings performed every year in August benefit the families of all income levels and neighborhoods.

The CAUP Team

The CAUP Team members all live in Pampajasi and all but one consider themselves urban Aymaras; one member described herself as partly Aymara and partly Quechua. Most are between twenty and forty years old: two-thirds are women and most have children. They come from diverse backgrounds including the lowlands, the valleys, the rural Andean countryside, the mines and the city. All are fluent or at least familiar with the Aymara language because they were brought up by Aymara-speaking parents.

Living in Pampajasi gives them a common neighborhood origin, an easy comradeship and helps them intertwine their families and their work at CAUP.

Among the CAUP Team members are a few of the caretakers from Machaq Uta, representatives from Qulla Uta and representatives from the Awicha groups many of whom have full-time jobs elsewhere.

When I asked about the hierarchy of the CAUP Team members in relation to the rest of the CAUP membership, I was told: “*CAUP somos todos*” (everyone is CAUP), meaning that the Team does not think of itself as a separate entity, much less, on a different level.

Every Wednesday night at about 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. the Team of 12 to 14 members gets together. There is a core group, members of the CAUP that perform specific jobs with each of the groups of the CAUP. Two members of the core group receive a salary for full-time work and others receive hourly pay according to the task performed for CAUP (bookkeeping, translation). None of the members of the CAUP Team make decisions for the groups nor represents them; they perform specific coordination or management tasks, or in the case of Javier Chipana, the specific, full-time job of teaching music and coordinating cultural events. As was said in a meeting, they “work for” the groups.

Other members such as Angel, Samuel, Don Mario, Doña Mery, Doña Cisca, Primi, and Lucía don’t receive a salary. They are volunteers who are almost always present at the Wednesday meetings, too. They all have day jobs outside of the CAUP. The volunteers are members of the CAUP in the sense that they are sometimes elected as

board members, as Angel was elected as treasurer for Machaq Uta in 2006. Lucía is a volunteer and she is also a tía, or caretaker, at Machaq Uta. CAUP Team members work directly with the groups and also coordinate all the work of the CAUP.

This form of flexible, permeable, transparent teamwork evolved together with the overall group process and as a result of the need for coordination that came up as the CAUP's work expanded. In this team, as in the three components of the CAUP, the main values and social practices of ayllu-community organizing are used to resolve practical needs and achieve an environment of well-being and agency. This topic shall be discussed at greater length in Chapter VI.

One person acts as a main representative of the combined three CAUP components (Awichas, Machaq Uta and Qulla Uta) and comes to the meetings. This position rotates every two years; one year the representative is elected from Awichas, in the next election two years later, from Machaq Uta and in the following election, from Qulla Uta and so on. This format is consistent with ayllu-community values and practices.

CAUP Team meetings take place in a small room on the second story of Machaq Uta. There is barely enough space for all of the people that come to the meeting, but that keeps the environment cozy. It has been said many times that the meetings are not obligatory, particularly for the volunteers, but everyone shows up anyway. CAUP Team meetings are for work but they are also social. After the personal stories and jokes, there is always someone that pulls everyone's attention back to the matters at hand. The weekly agenda always includes a report on how each Awicha group is doing and what issues have come up as well as how they have been solved. These issues include illnesses,

visits, conflicts and upcoming events. There are reports from those who have visited the rural Awicha groups, who have different activities and problems, based on the fact that they have more recently started organizing and are building their group facilities. There are also reports on the activities of the CAUP members who are teaching eight modules on indigenous cultures at a local public middle school and discussions about the coordination of events that may take place at the school. There are also reports on projects being written and/or presented, on finances and on the ongoing projects, activities or problems of Machaq Uta.

Multigenerational activities

As has been described, the CAUP is an association of three groups of urban Aymara people of different ages, who together constitute a multigenerational community that shares everyday tasks. As they participate in these tasks and activities, the younger members of the community learn from the adults how to behave socially and coexist with others.

The members of the three groups of the CAUP also celebrate special occasions such as the Aymara New Year at the end of June, when festivities take place including music and the preparing and selling of food in Pampajasi; an August *wajta* or Aymara ritual invoking harmony and peace which involves the burning of an offering, the good wishes and blessings of all the people, and the bringing and sharing of food by the participants. They also celebrate Tupac Katari (a local Aymara hero) Day in October as well as participate in the yearly neighborhood fiesta known as Santiago, a multi-day

neighborhood affair in the month of July, with its *entrada*, a parade in which groups of participants dress up and dance to music. Each group of participants has its own band. Dancing at the *entrada*, from the starting point to the end, takes about 6 hours and most of the youngsters, the mothers, the fathers and the Awichas complete the entire trajectory, aided by the observers who are there with water, soda and a little beer to help the participants stay fresh and energetic throughout the long dance down the winding streets of Pampajasi.

Throughout the year there are also multi-day trips in which groups of Awichas, mothers and children visit other groups, go out of town, perform plays or play music. Multigenerational day-trips or outings are also common.

CAUP funding

The daycare center, Machaq Uta, is currently 60% self-supporting. The self-generated funds cover all expenses except for the caretakers' salaries. Their salaries come from small private donations from two groups of private donors in Sweden and from two families in Germany. Qulla Uta, the Center for Traditional Healing and Spirituality is self-supporting. According to Mercedes Zerda, the Awichas, the groups of Senior Citizens, receive between \$16,000 and \$17,000 a year, with which the organization supports five groups in the city and four in the countryside, totaling approximately 450 people. Including the private donations received by Machaq Uta for salaries, which amount to about \$4,000 a year, the total funding received by CAUP for about between 500 and 600 people is about \$20,000 a year.

The organizations which support them are HelpAge, Fundación San Luis, Horizontes and a few private donors. Svalorna, a Swedish organization, has been a long-time supporter since the first years of CAUP's work, mostly through providing paid Swedish "volunteers", but recently it is re-thinking its strategic goals and objectives. In previous years, Svalorna had supported open-ended cultural projects, but in an interview with two of Svalorna's directors in Bolivia, they explained that surrendering to pressures from the Swedish government, they now seek to only fund specific projects with quantifiable outcomes. This has affected their capacity and interest in funding CAUP's identity-based work and last year was the first, after almost 25 years, that the CAUP did not receive funding from them.

The CAUP's acquisition of legal status

The CAUP now appears to be entering a new phase. The paperwork legalizing the CAUP's existence has been completed. In that documentation, the CAUP presents a unified group identity towards society that is more concrete, that has sharper contours. It is now a "cultural association", the first of its kind within Bolivian law. This new status, together with efforts to develop a website and photo histories of the CAUP will help make the CAUP's work better known and more visible locally and internationally.

The CAUP's status during the first fifteen or twenty years had been more in the realm of the "alternate" and low profile, mostly known and understood by members, neighbors and local and international friends. Each "component" was independent; members interacted, but there was no "umbrella organization" or a common name by

which all three were known. Whereas the three groups were not widely known outside of Pampajasi, now more people have heard of “the CAUP”. The members of each component still see themselves as “Machaq Uta”, or as “the Awichas” and they each continue to function as ayllu-communities as they always did. However, now they are formally known as “the CAUP” and Team members coordinate the work between the three components.

In that sense, this shift to higher visibility and an official status was an important one, a decision that in previous times, according to interviews with some CAUP members, they had been reluctant to make because it could imply entering a different dimension, “buying into the system”, or otherwise compromising their autonomy.

The main reason given to me for this shift towards legality and therefore formality and visibility was that both their long time financial donors and their potential sources of funding started to change their requirements and become more interested in paperwork and the formal mechanisms of accountability. It took two years to get the paperwork for the new CAUP status to be approved, but they thought through what they wanted their legal norms and statutes to be. The new legal status that was created to accommodate the CAUP’s work now exists as a legal precedent for those who follow in their footsteps.

Planning these norms and statutes brought the representatives and volunteers of the CAUP together every week and this was the origin of a more formal CAUP Team. Other indirect but contributing factors that may have played a part in this shift towards formality are:

- 1) The CAUP has been growing steadily, their demographics have been changing and therefore, their needs and aspirations have as well. Since the CAUP is self-managed, it follows that a majority of the members considered that obtaining the recognition of legal status was desirable;
- 2) The world in which indigenous organizations existed and acted in the 1980s has changed and now invites more visibility on the part of the actors themselves;
- 3) The city of La Paz has changed and also the political climate in Bolivia since the election of the first indigenous president in 2005, which has spurred the need for more direct and intensive interaction between indigenous organizations such as CAUP and the government;
- 4) The CAUP has been increasingly asked to participate in public forums and describe its work, locally and abroad, putting more pressure on its members to explain many of their principles and methods; in a sense they are being asked to translate them, to make them explicit and understandable to non-members, non-Aymaras and foreigners;
- 5) The two main strategic supporters of the CAUP throughout the twenty five years of its existence, have now begun to retire. Their support will continue, but they now rarely participate in CAUP meetings. Whatever practical or emotional support their specific and continued presence implied will eventually cease.

All of these factors signal changes in the way the CAUP relates to the outside world and are an example of the CAUP's adaptability to new challenges. They have decided to define or re-define their public face, but the nature of their work, its direction and its goals, have not ostensibly changed. While this is apparently only a change in

external definition it will probably have repercussions on the self-perception of members through increased contact with other grassroots groups, researchers, and policy-makers.

Endnotes:

¹ Original in Spanish: “Entre las décadas de los sesenta, setenta y ochenta, la migración de la gente del campo y provincias hacia la ciudad de La Paz, mayormente aymaras, creció de gran manera a causa de la falta de tierras o buscando mejorar su futuro. La mayoría de ellos eran jóvenes: las mujeres trabajaban de empleadas domésticas, vendedoras ambulantes o lavanderas; los varones por su parte, se dedicaban, la mayoría, al oficio de albañil, u otros oficios eventuales que les ayudaban en su sustento. La zona de Pampajasi era una de las zonas más alejadas de lo que en ese entonces era el centro de la ciudad. Ese fue el principio de nuestra historia. Tal vez algunos de nuestros papás y mamás eran aún niños y jóvenes cuando llegaron a la zona de Pampajasi. Con el tiempo llegaron a formar sus familias, muchos de ellos, de escasos recursos económicos. Entonces, un grupo de esas mujeres jóvenes y madres de familias de aymaras migrantes que se habían establecido en Pampajasi tenían la necesidad de un lugar donde dejar a sus hijos mientras ellas y sus esposos trabajaban. Fue de esta manera que surgió un grupo de madres que, apoyadas por una pareja de psicólogos que también se habían establecido en Pampajasi, fundaron, en el año 1982, un grupo social y una guardería única en su genero. Los psicólogos siempre pensaron que la misma gente debería saber manejar sus recursos económicos y materiales abiertamente, donde el manejo del dinero sea a la vista de todos los participantes, sin estar extendiendo la mano ni depender siempre de las ONGs, o de sus profesionales, un sistema donde la base grupal sea la cabeza y no la cola, donde todos decidan, aporten y reciban y no sólo unos cuantos.”

² However, peasant unions were only granted an arbitrary faction (13%) of representation within the Central Obrera Boliviana, COB (Central Worker’s Union). (Mendoza, 1986).

³ Original in Spanish: “Todo lo que había que hacer era empezar a hacerlo. Empezaron sin proyecto, sin financiamiento, sin alimentos de donación [...]. Todos los proyectos de los GOBS [grupos de base] han nacido mas o menos así: primero se empieza, luego se piensa en lo que se necesita, se trata de conseguirlo, y trabajando todos juntos, se avanza en función de un objetivo más o menos inmediato.”

⁴ Original in Spanish: “Este grupo depende de nosotros nomás. De nadie más. Los otros grupos dependen de algún institución. Los otros grupos están peleando nomás. Nosotros

no peleamos porque nosotros nos entendemos. Los otros pelean de los trabajos, porque no trabajan igual. Nosotros trabajamos igual, todos igual. Si ganamos poco o mucho, todo igual. Si podemos ganar unas más otras menos, también podemos pelear. Nosotros estamos igual. Los otros grupos no tienen su plata, por eso también no pueden adelantar. No manejan su plata. Tienen jefes, el jefe agarra la plata. En este grupo nosotros mismos agarramos la plata, sabemos cuánto tenemos y así todo medimos también.”

⁵ Original in Spanish: “La mujer es [...] muy importante dentro de nuestras culturas originarias, pero no lo es menos el hombre, porque ambos se complementan dentro de la naturaleza, por eso se determina *chacha-warmi*, que quiere decir que todo tiene su par o complemento: [...] piedras hembra y macho; plantas hembra y macho; hasta los instrumentos musicales tienen sus hembras y machos. Lo propio ocurre en la comunidad, para una mejor organización y participación deben estar involucrados hombres y mujeres. En fin la mujer es el complemento espiritual del hombre y el hombre es el complemento material de la mujer; así ambos forman el núcleo de la familia y por consecuencia el de la sociedad. El rol de las mujeres en CAUP nos abrió muchas puertas [...] están las awichas, las mamás amas de casa, las universitarias, profesionales, colegiales, bebas; en fin, siempre está metida la mujer en todas partes, así que [contribuyen] por medio de sus ideas y opiniones, críticas, consejos, proyectos...”

⁶ Original in Spanish: “En la mayor parte de las agrupaciones de personas de edad de las áreas urbanas de Bolivia, una gran parte de los integrantes son mujeres, siempre más del 90%, eso debido a que entre los hombres de cultura urbana, las agrupaciones de viejos son "cosa de mujeres" para tejer, bordar, bailar y los hombres aunque jubilados, están destinados a cosas más sublimes. En ese sentido hay un desequilibrio de género en contra de los hombres, pues se quedan solos en sus casas. En cambio en los grupos Awicha tenemos un porcentaje de 30% de hombres, porque nuestra forma de organización es como la del área rural donde no hay desequilibrios de género en la participación, de ese modo nuestro porcentaje de hombres es menor sólo porque hay más viudas que viudos, pues en el área rural se queda la pareja y como el hombre muere primero, queda la mujer anciana y los hijos la traen a la ciudad.”

CHAPTER IV

LIVING IN CONDITIONS OF SUBALTERNITY

This chapter will address the issue of subalternity and how it has manifested in the lives of the women, men, children, and senior citizens of Pampajasi, particularly in the early 1980s when the first CAUP group began to organize. These conditions continue to exist, but they are countered by the work of the CAUP members in their ayllu-community, as will be discussed more fully in Chapters V and VI.

Subalternity

“Subalternity” and “the subaltern” are concepts that can be utilized to describe the varying conditions of invisibility and silence in which most indigenous peoples, poor people, women, children and the very old live their lives in Bolivia. Unless contested, Bolivian society has tended to see and judge itself from the hegemonic perspective of the Bolivian criollo sectors. The educational system has usually also encouraged children and young adults to construct their identities from that hegemonic perspective.

The term “subaltern” was first introduced by the Italian Marxist intellectual Antonio Gramsci. He used the word “subaltern” in his prison writings instead of “proletarian” to avoid censorship (Spivak, 2000, p. 324). The term “subalternity” was later conceptualized and used by the theorists of subalternity and colonialism and post-

colonialism to describe the other side of the coin of hegemony and to discuss issues of agency and representation. Although historians, literary critics and anthropologists have written many volumes on these topics, the studies of subalternity mostly constitute a perspective (Veena Das in Rivera, 1997, p. 292) which demands to see *all* of the social actors and their impact on social processes and how this can be achieved. Subaltern studies illustrate how the agency of non-hegemonic actors was overlooked by history, literature, and anthropology and how this situation has started to change. If subalternity is non-hegemony: invisibility, passivity, silence, then this condition is subverted when the voices, histories, and the agency of subalternized peoples comes to light.

In the 1970s the School of Subaltern Studies arose and began interrogating the issues surrounding oppression, based on reflections about British colonialism and Indian nationalism (Rivera, 1997, p. 11). Ranajit Guha defines “subalternity” as simply “of inferior rank...whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way” (Brass, 2000, p. 134). Guja adds that “subordination cannot be understood except as one of the constitutive terms of a binary relation in which the other is domination, because ‘the subalternate groups are always subject to the activity of the groups that govern, even when they rebel and revolt’” (Rivera, 1997, p. 24).

The literary critics of the School of Subaltern Studies such as John Beverley and Gayatri Chakravorti Spivak reflect on the difficulties of “recovering” or “describing” the subaltern from a discursive, literary perspective. This perspective proposes that “the subaltern cannot manifest outside of the thinking of the ‘elite’” (Rivera, 1997, p. 256).

Florencia Mallon and Silvia Rivera both acknowledge the applicability of some of the theorizations on subalternity to Latin America (Mallon, 1994, p. 1492, Rivera, 1997, p.13). In the work of contemporary authors, Subaltern Studies are now linked to Colonial Studies, to Latin American Cultural Studies, and to cultural criticism among others.

In this section I will use the term “subalternity” to describe a time and a place, which is Pampajasi in the 1980s and, specifically, the *subalternizing conditions* of poverty, discrimination, racism and exclusion in which the women of the CAUP lived before they began to organize in the 1980s: a time when they decided to get together and find solutions for their common problems.

As has been stated before in the introduction, most of the women who founded the first groups of what is now the CAUP were indigenous, poor and mothers of small children. Few spoke Spanish. Some were heads of household. These conditions were aggravated by migration to the city. Living in the city sharpened their awareness of the differences in values and lifestyles between criollo and indigenous peoples, between rich and poor and awareness of their own exclusion and oppression. With regard to the situation of Aymara migrants to the city of La Paz in this time period, Silvia Rivera wrote in 1986 that

...because of the kind of insertion they have had in the urban environment, Aymaras are especially sensitive to the vestiges of colonial and racist mentality which is dominant among the criollo strata of the population and they live with intensity the everyday occurrences of discrimination and exclusion. (1986, p. 119, 120)

Being indigenous in the city

Most of the urban Aymara population is the result of ongoing migration from the countryside to the city, particularly in the last fifty years. Despite the possibilities of upward economic, political, and social mobility provided by an urban context, a majority of urban Aymaras live on the margins of a criollo society and State, in poverty or near poverty, and subject to over and covert forms of discrimination.

The steady trickle of rural migrants to the cities began mostly after 1952, when the indigenous peoples of Bolivia were finally granted the right to vote and access to formal education. They also received, through an agrarian reform and redistribution, small, private tracts of land that did not take into account the ayllu community form of land tenure. The flow of migration to the city of La Paz increased in the 1970s. At that time, little was known about the lives of these migrants, their needs or their culture in the city.

The groundbreaking research of Albó, Greaves and Sandoval, published between 1981 and 1987, revealed that the reasons for these rural-urban migrations included the scarcity of cultivatable land in the countryside after the Agrarian reform and privatization of ownership which aggravated rural poverty and the desire to access formal education and jobs. Most of the migrants to the city were between 10 and 30 years of age. When they arrived they generally lived with their family members or with friends from their original communities, who helped them adjust to city life in accordance with the principles of community solidarity.¹

According to census data, in 1976 the Department of La Paz was already 43.35% urban (most of this population living in the city of La Paz). The next census in 1992 revealed that the urban population of the Department of La Paz grew to 62.47% because of rural migration to the city and it confirmed that there was a chronic shortage of adequate housing, health care and schools and that the levels of unemployment and underemployment were rampant.

As was mentioned in Chapter II, moving to the city had long been assumed by mainstream criollo society to be a transition from a rural-oriented Aymara identity to a city-based *mestizo* one. Aymara intellectuals, and also the CAUP, contested this perspective, maintaining that being Aymara went beyond stereotypical representations of Aymara identity which were associated with living in the rural areas, being a farmer and being poor: “The Aymaras are a nation and therefore are not all farmers but rather workers, professionals, university students, academics...” (Ari Chachaki, 2001, p. 17).

The men typically had more difficulty finding work in the city than the women. The women found hourly or on-demand work like washing clothes by hand for the middle classes or started small businesses such as selling food on the streets. Many women stayed close to home because of care-giving responsibilities for their children and for the elderly members of their families (Zerda, 1997, p. 42). The CAUP’s work began within that context - a context of migration and almost non-existent resources for the rural migrants in the city.

Being a woman in Pampajasi

Most women's contributions to the family are invisible because it is assumed that it is their duty as women to make them. Particularly in situations of economic duress or when services for their children and families are scarce, it is expected that women in Pampajasi, as everywhere else, will try to find ways to enter the workforce or look for alternatives that will allow them to provide for their families. To gain access to income or services, one resource is to seek solutions that go beyond what each woman individually can do or find on her own. Therefore, many of the efforts of rural migrant women to survive have involved networking with family members and personal connections.

As Gayatri Chakravorti Spivak writes, women tend to be generically categorized as subaltern, particularly if, besides being female, they are indigenous and poor – “they get it in three ways” (Spivak, 1994, p. 90). This was true for these first women organizers of the Pampajasi groups, who were all three and, additionally, were rural migrants to the city.

The first women that got together in Pampajasi were not sure they'd be able to make it on their own. They were women of a rural origin who were living in the city with few Spanish language skills and most had small children. Some of them were familiar with NGOs and development organizations. It was intimidating for them to walk into a social services office in La Paz or a project management office. If services were available, women felt that they were obligated to accept the services as offered or risk losing the opportunity to receive help. The following quote illustrates the attitude with which many women approached donating agencies:

When we started our group, we thought we couldn't organize independently, we thought that we always had to depend on an institution. We thought it was illegal to try to organize as a group with no institution. That's why we wanted to ask the *doctor* [Javier] and Peti everything, we were afraid to make mistakes. We always have to accept what they offer us, otherwise those young ladies, those *licenciados*, [university graduates] could be offended and take away their money, their food, their work that they were offering.² (Doña Juana, 1988, in Zerda, 1997, p. 206)

Gayatri Spivak writes that women's agency is even more effaced (1994, p. 88)

and subalternized than that of men. Even when the situation of women is put under scrutiny, through slight of hand our hegemonic perspective shifts women's lives and agency out of view and positions them in passive compliance of their obligations as women.

Being young in Pampajasi

The world of young urban Aymaras is culturally complex and often contradictory. They are exposed to Aymara values at home, international values through the media, and hegemonic criollo values in school. Urban Aymara parents want their children to be hard-working and have a good life, so they instill in their sons and daughters the need to respect Aymara tradition, values and practices, but at the same time are afraid that their children will be discriminated against and therefore many do not teach their children to speak Aymara (Guaygua, Riveros & Quisbert, 2000, pp. 59-73). The following excerpts from CAUP interviews illustrate these difficulties:

At school they used to tell us, no one wants to be an Indian because you can't get anywhere if you are an Indian.³ (Member of Qulla Uta)

Before, we were even ashamed to speak Aymara, because if you spoke Aymara you were discriminated against...and amid racists, you necessarily got contaminated and then you had to act that way to be accepted by the other group.⁴
(Member of Machaq Uta)

Before I would ask myself, who am I, am I Aymara or what...I don't speak perfect Aymara because I feel like I had a lock put on me. My parents and grandparents would not let me speak Aymara.⁵ (CAUP Team member)

People do not define who they are in a vacuum. Identities do not exist “in and of themselves”; rather, they exist within systems of meaning and language (Hall, 1997, p. 15) and through representation, by establishing differences. Representation is not only how people represent themselves, but how they are represented by others and the relations of power that underlie these representations. Stuart Hall writes that “[i]dentity is a structured representation which only achieves its positive through the narrow eye of the negative. It has to go through the eye of the needle of the other before it can construct itself” (Grossberg, 1996, p. 89). Therefore, what he calls “politics of representation” is an important aspect of the constantly evolving construction of identities, where “identity is always a temporary and unstable effect of relations which define identities by making differences” (Ibid).

Living in an environment where your classmates, teachers, the people in town and the media make you feel ashamed to be who you are and ashamed of your parents is confusing and painful. A young man of CAUP told me that he witnessed this conversation among his friends at school. When one of them pointed and asked, “Isn't that your mother going down the street, with her *polleras* [traditional skirts]?” the other boy replied hastily: “Oh, that woman? She's not my mother, she's our maid,” when in

fact, she was his mother. The boy felt ashamed of her and he denied their connection, set himself apart from her. This type of story is common as the shame of being indigenous in the urban centers is widespread. This next quote expresses the difficulty of living between the Aymara and the q'ara worlds:

For me in particular, it's been a little hard [...] because in school it was all about Western life, fashions, music in English, the way you dress: in school you were taught to hate *abarcas* (traditional sandals), the *lluchu* (traditional woolen hat), the *poncho*, speaking Aymara and in those moments you feel lost, you don't know what you are doing because in your house they say one thing and in school they say something else. And it's hard for you to say, I am this, this is what I am doing, this is where I am going. For me it's been hard and it has affected me a lot.⁶

To borrow Stuart Hall's phrase about identity, indigenous people arrive at the dead-end of a negative self view when they see themselves through the narrow eye of the hegemonic. As indigenous agency exposes and works to change colonialist perceptions, the self construction of indigenous identity can cease to follow a pattern of self devaluation and shame.

Being old in Pampajasi

When talking about what community-style organization has meant for the CAUP members, Mercedes Zerda, social community psychologist, describes how the senior members of the Awicha community felt lost, out of context and "orphaned" upon arriving to the city and not being able to adapt or adjust until they again became part of a community. One awicha said:

I didn't like living alone in a rented room [...] Before I felt sorrow for my children, I'm so alone I'd say and cry all the time. I'd cook and I couldn't eat, I'd throw it all out. I would cook only to throw it out.⁷ (Member of the Bajo Pampajasi Awicha group)

The old men and women that are brought to the city by their children often find that their families have changed and, specifically, that relationships between children and their elders are not respectful. They cannot make sense of their new environment and of the urban values that are so often contrary to their own. There are no open spaces like they are accustomed to in the country and everything is crowded. Nothing can be accomplished without money. They feel like a burden to their families or they end up alone, earning a few pennies doing odd jobs.

Who decides who is indigenous

The concept of who is indigenous and what constitutes being indigenous is a constantly evolving socio-cultural and economic construction that is dependent on the national power structures. Franz Fanon wrote that in countries that had been colonized the colonial subject is always over determined from the colonial perspective: "Every effort is made to bring the colonized person to admit the inferiority of his culture, which has been transformed into instinctive patterns of behavior, to recognize the unreality of his 'nation'" (Fanon, 1994). This constant devaluation of peoples and their culture and habitus has long-lasting detrimental effects on their self-esteem.

The concept of "being Indian" was born together with the Spanish colonization of the territories now known as Bolivia. The term "indian" or "indio" in Spanish described a

status of 'native vassal' to the Spanish Crown with specific "legal, administrative, fiscal and racial" properties (Larson, 2004, p. 40). The term expressed a need for segregation "to maintain ethnic and racial differences and differentiated geographical spaces and legal systems (Yrigoyen, 2002, p. 158). The hegemonic construction of the natural inferiority of the indigenous populations, embodied in the terms "indian" or "indio" during the Colony, justified their political and economic exploitation.

According to Silvia Rivera, the terms "Aymara" and "Quichua" [sic] also have a colonial origin because the terms group peoples who were diverse (Canchis, Canas, Collas, Lupacas, Pacajes, etc.), under a generic term. These names, therefore, "carry the imprint of racial stereotyping, of cultural intolerance and the effort to 'colonize souls'" (Rivera, 1993, p. 35). In the early 1800s, the re-installation of the tributo indigenal or colonial style head tax during the Republic was a form of "re-indianization" and re-enforcing of the ethnic boundaries and stereotypes.

In the 1850s, with the aggressive liberal policies of the Bolivian government, the terms "*indio*" and "*indigena*" became synonymous with primitive and premodern, and indigenous peoples were considered a deterrent for development. These were liberal concepts, in which "Indians" were considered barbarians and the Spanish and the criollos, "civilized". Later, "a more modern social thought that incorporated the vital energy of the indigenous race with the natural force of the environment" was proposed by Bolivian intellectuals, generating ambivalent sentiments of nostalgia but at the same time precluding any form of indigenous agency (Sanjinés, 2005, p. 36). "The Indian" was proposed as a mythical forbearer and noble inheritor of a millenary tradition, while the

flesh and blood indigenous peoples saw no change in their subaltern status or the quality of their lives.

From an ideological perspective, Mercedes Zerda describes her perception of the concept of “Indian” or “indio” in these terms:

...an Indian is the descendent of the native population of this continent, in contrast to those who gave them that name: the Spaniards and their descendants [...] “Indian” is a concept, a thing (an idea that we, the others, have created, not the Indians) and to which we attribute characteristics, rights, duties...Indians exist to our eyes, in other words to the eyes of who we consider non-Indians. We have invented them. In sum, it is not a racial concept, it is an ideological concept that has persisted because of the relations between oppressor and oppressed [...] In racial terms, the mix is doubtlessly general, as most Bolivians are *mestizos*; but a *mestizo* that has a luxury car and has no knowledge of any native language is not the same thing, just because he is [racially] a *mestizo*, as another, who lives in a hut on the *altiplano* and barely guesses at one or two words in Spanish. In racial terms, we are all *mestizos*, but in ideological terms, we exist as *q'aras*⁸ and Indians. (Zerda, 1997, pp. 36, 37)

The term “indio” therefore cannot be understood outside of a context of colonization, but has also developed archetypical characteristics according to the historical period and the prevailing ideology. The word “indio” was not used by the Aymara, the Quechua, or any other Bolivian nation, to describe themselves until the 1960s, when Fausto Reinaga wrote in the Constitutive Document of the Partido Indio: “We are not *Indios*, but with the name *Indios* we were oppressed and with the name *Indios* we will be liberated” (Pacheco, 1992, p. 33).

In 1972, the United Nations declared that indigenous peoples have the right to self-definition and to decide who belonged to an indigenous population. The UN definition says that:

...indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories and their ethnic identity as a basis of their continued existence as peoples in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems. (Muecke, 2005, p. 182).

The indigenous population in Bolivia accounts for more than half of the total and the structural changes that the claim for indigenous acknowledgement and participation in government institutions will require are profound.⁹

The question of who decides who is indigenous in Bolivia is basically an ideological battle for hegemony: criollo policy makers, who advocate for an idealized view of the nation unified through the idea of *mestizaje*, contend that upon their arrival in the city, rural Aymara migrants ceased to be indigenous and became *cholos* or *mestizos*, thus negating the continuation of Aymara ethnicity. Indianists instead say that since the 1960s the city of La Paz has been an important center of Aymara intellectual activity and identity-building. Also, from a demographic point of view, despite the increase of Spanish speakers in the city, the number of Aymara speakers has not diminished for many decades. A linguistic study conducted there by linguist and anthropologist Xavier Albó in recent years shows that many Aymara are born in the city and learn to speak Aymara in the city. In fact, people have increasingly begun to *self-identify* as Aymaras in the city of La Paz, whether or not they speak the language (1995, p. 21). In the last census of 2001, more than 60% of the population of the city self-identified as Aymara and over 80% in the neighboring city of El Alto. This is one more reason the CAUP believes that

the urban Aymara people of La Paz have a right to be considered an ethnic group, for their children to be educated in ways that are respectful of that cultural heritage, and for their spiritual and physical health to be cared for in culturally appropriate ways.

Subalternity and collective identity

Creating a group or a movement implies that individuals agree on their common needs and on a common identity. This helps individuals to find where they belong, their place in the world, and helps them design a course of action. A sustainable organization has a sense of self, of what it is and what it's for: that which we can call an identity. The stability of this identity allows members and outsiders to identify with what their organization is and what it does.

The CAUP has maintained its stability and cohesiveness and has also evolved to meet its collective needs. This has taken place through the common identity and the common practice of community.

The CAUP did not begin its activities around a militancy, with a declared goal, banner or logo, nor under any kind of party leadership, inspiration by rightwing or leftwing ideas, or politics, church, NGO, or any formal plan for development. Neither the grassroots members nor the donors or strategic supporters framed the organizing efforts of the fledgling community within any theoretical parameters. The construction of community took place through grassroots initiative and "community" turned out to be at the same time the means and the goal. This took place because the original group of

women from Pampajasi created a community around their common needs and named it a community. Agency occurred as a byproduct of community.

Before the CAUP groups formally became “CAUP”, they were already stable and cohesive: Their group identity was established. The name “CAUP” and subsequent legalization as an organization was a recent decision that consolidated the “face” of the community towards society while the community continues its work. The idea of stability and cohesiveness is to some degree static:

“Identity is to do with the imagined sameness of a person or of a social group at all times [...] Identity may be regarded as a fiction, intended to put an orderly pattern and narrative on the actual complexity and multitudinous nature of both psychological and social worlds.” (Robins, 2005, p. 172)

However, identity also has a dynamic side: Identity is also an ongoing process of definition and redefinition in relation to others (Grossberg, 1996, p. 89). This redefinition is taking place more clearly now, as the CAUP adapts to the needs of its membership and to the demands of forces outside of it.

The CAUP’s stated mission appears to feed its sense of identity and self-sameness and helps change how urban Aymara people are subalternized, perceived and treated in larger society and to change how they have historically been taught to see themselves, within the frameworks of racism, discrimination and exclusion. The CAUP, on one hand, works to construct and maintain a sense of collective identity and positive self-affirmation and representation. On the other hand, it works to generate and sustain a sense and a reality of agency among its members in the face of negative feed back from

the hegemonic sectors of society and, as such, it is changing all the time to adapt to the needs of its members. “Unity based on identity is not natural or inevitable but the result of the continual construction of artificial closure against the constant grain of difference” (Stephens quoting Hall, 2005, p. 70). The concept of agency will be further discussed in Chapter VI.

Despite their familial ties with the rural communities from which they came, CAUP members, like most urban Aymaras, do not seek to replicate or copy the lives and practices of rural Aymaras. Living cultures grow and diversify into new forms of culture instead of seeking to preserve old stereotypes. Within that framework, CAUP members have not attempted to copy the ayllu-community of the rural Aymara, but rather to construct an urban Aymara community adapted to their needs in the city. Once coded and reviewed, the interviews and conversations held with today’s CAUP members revealed a consistent sense of ownership, pride and empowerment:

...in the beginning it almost seemed like what we were doing in the CAUP was wrong, because the system itself was so much bigger than we were and it was very hard...but time has gone by and people now have a vision that things can be different. Before, under an oppressive and racist system we felt that we couldn’t make any headway. You had to be white or you had to be wealthy to advance in life. But now people are changing and all of us are moving forward, people are finally starting to do things. We are farther ahead and now people say, you were right... oppressed people can learn to govern themselves, have faith in their strength and in what they have, know that they are no less than anybody else. That’s why now we have women in polleras in the Parliament...¹⁰ (CAUP Team member)

Endnotes:

¹ See Albó, X. , Greaves, T., Sandoval, G. (1983). *Chukiyawu, La Cara Aymara de La Paz. III. Cabalgando Entre Dos Mundos.*

² Original in Spanish: “Cuando empezamos nuestro grupo, creíamos que no se podía organizar independiente, pensábamos que siempre hay que dependerse de una institución, creíamos que era ilegal hacer un grupo sin institución. Por eso todo queríamos preguntar al doctor y a la Peti, teníamos miedo equivocarnos. Siempre hay que aceptarse lo que nos vienen a ofrecer, sino esas señoritas, esos licenciados pueden ofenderse y se lo pueden llevar su plata o su alimento o su trabajo que han venido a traer.”

³ Original in Spanish: “En la escuela nos decían, nadie quiere ser indio porque no se llega a ningún lado...”

⁴ Original in Spanish: “Antes hasta nos daba vergüenza hablar aymara porque te discriminaban...y entre racistas, necesariamente te contagiabas, y entonces tenías que portarte así para ser aceptado por el otro grupo.”

⁵ Original in Spanish: “Antes me preguntaba, quién soy, soy Aymara o qué soy...yo no hablo perfectamente el aymara porque siento que tengo un candado. Mis papas y mis abuelos no me dejaban hablar Aymara.”

⁶ Original in Spanish: “A mi en especial ha sido un poquito duro vivir lo comunitario...porque en el colegio era la vida occidental, la moda, la música en inglés, la vestimenta. En el colegio tenías que odiar las abarcas, el lluchu el poncho, hablar aymara...y uno no sabe en ese momento donde está parado, ni que estás haciendo, porque en tu casa te dicen una cosa y en el colegio te dicen otra, y es difícil para uno decir, soy esto o que estoy haciendo o adonde estoy yendo, para mi ha sido bien difícil y afecta mucho.”

⁷ Original in Spanish: “No, solita en mi cuarto alquilado no me gustaba, así con grupo así como entre hermanas, entre familiares siempre estamos, más tranquilo me siento, ya no tengo pena ya, antes por mis hijos tenía pena, así solita me he quedado diciendo, en puro llorar, me cocinaba no comía, botaba, para botar nomás cocinaba, no me entraba...”

⁸ Mercedes Zerda explains that “*Q'ara* is the term with which the Aymara refer to in private to the white or *mestizo*. It is not a purely racial term, it has cultural and social class elements. An Aymara can turn into a *q'ara* in the degree to which he/she loses his/her Aymara cultural identity and becomes more economically wealthy. It is, therefore, an ideological term...”

⁹ On November 1st of 2007, The National Congress of Bolivia elevated to the rank of law the UN Declaration of Indigenous Rights, with its 46 articles. It is the first country in the world to do so. La Razon, La Paz, Bolivia, at http://www.la-razon.com/versiones/20071101_006077/nota_262_501156.htm.

¹⁰ Original in Spanish: “Parecía que las cosas que hacíamos en el CAUP estaban mal, que el sistema mismo era tanto más grande que lo que estábamos haciendo y era bien difícil, y ha pasado un tiempo en que la gente tiene ya esa vision de que puede ser diferente, antes era un sistema opresor y el racismo nos hacian pensar que no podiamos avanzar, que habia que ser blanco o millonario para poder progresar en la vida. Pero la gente esta cambiando y todo lo que nosotros estamos avanzando la gente recién esta empezando a hacer. Nosotros ya estamos adelante, ahora nos estan dando la razón, viendo que ... podemos, si nos organizamos...que esa gente oprimida se sepa gobernar, sepa tener seguridad en su fortaleza, que tienen lo suyo y que no son menos que los demas, por eso ahora hay mujeres de pollera en el parlamento...”

CHAPTER V

THE CAUP AS AN AYLLU-COMMUNITY, AS HABITUS

AND AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Early on, CAUP members generated a sense of community and a sense that they all shared common codes and a common purpose. This is an excerpt of an interview done by reporter Verónica Guzmán of the women of *Warminakax Saranti* (“Women Who go Forward”, name of the first CAUP group) in March of 1985 and published in Chitakolla newsletter #19. It reflects the solidarity of their small community:

Doña Nemesia: We understand each other because we know each other, we are well organized and stick together.

Doña Vicky: In ‘Warminakax Saranti’ we are organized because Saturday after Saturday we have no clashes. Here, in the group, we all think the same thoughts...

Doña Nemesia: Most of us think the same way because we share a lot of friendship, we know each other and we get along. In the beginning there was a lot of different thinking but then we joined our thoughts into a single thought and we have all worked for the group.

Doña Fermina: [...] in this group we only speak Aymara and we understand each other in everything.¹

A few introductory words on the concept of community will precede a description of the ayllu-communities of Bolivia. Then a discussion of the CAUP as an urban form of ayllu-community will be followed by a discussion of the CAUP as a social movement.s

General considerations on community

Despite their obvious diversity, communities generally involve a group of people, a quality of relationship, and a place (Creed, 2006, p. 4). Creed calls our attention to the fact that few people, social scientists or otherwise, have anything negative to say about the concept of community, which until recently has practically constituted an archetype: “[a]ll references [...] conjure to some degree qualities of harmony, homogeneity, autonomy, immediacy, locality, morality, solidarity and identity, as well as the idea of shared knowledge, interest and meanings” (Creed, 2006, p.5).

However, the term can also be explored from many other perspectives: from that of the demise of the community in its traditional form and its rebirth and new expressions; the use of community in governance and ideas regarding the nation; from the perspectives of production, capitalism and socialism; from the perspective of increasing social fragmentation; the loss of freedoms through certain modalities of community; and also as related to nostalgia and security (Creed, 2006).

Particularly useful to this thesis are the aspects of 1) how cultural communities can also be invested with cultural values and symbolism and used as mobilizing concepts by social movements, and 2) how communities can be part of people’s habitus (Pierre Bourdieu’s implied deep levels of learned culture that are hidden away in the unconscious and generate cultural actions).

The ayllu, a community that involves territory, social values, and practices

The ayllu-community, the basic unit of Aymara social and political organization, is a very particular kind of community which has played an important role in the history of the Aymaras and of the Bolivian nation. Elements of ayllu-community forms of organization have long been part of how people in the Andes live and work together and in the last twenty years or so the ayllu has also become a mobilizing symbol for the indigenous people of the Western regions of the country.

The ayllu continues to be *jatha*, or the seed of the political and economic unit of organization of the Aymara and Quechua peoples. One of the more complete definitions of the ayllu says that it is “the basic cell of Andean social organization [...] a set of Chinese boxes ... [in which] each territorial and kinship unit is part of a larger ethnic unit, within a framework that culminates in a large dual organization whose two moieties relate to one another as complementary opposites: above-below, masculine-feminine, older-younger, etc.” (Rivera, 1990, p. 100).

The ayllus of the Departments of Potosí and Oruro have conserved more of their original “nested layers”. The ayllus of the Department of La Paz for the most part conserved the “grassroots” level ayllus, clusters of between 40 and 100 families that continue to depend on each other to make joint decisions, benefit from systems of reciprocity, acquire prestige, produce, celebrate rituals, and derive a sense of identity and a sense of community. The modern ayllus function much as the ayllus of more than five centuries ago did, but they are not just archaic survivals, they have changed and continue to adapt to the times. Many men and women in rural Bolivia now speak Spanish and have

gone to school, spend part of their time in the city, choose to wear city clothing when appropriate, and eat food they have not grown themselves. However, members of ayllu-communities continue traditions, including the need to comply with the duties of membership. If individuals within an ayllu community marry and have land, husband and wife are considered a unit, *una persona* (one person). Their obligations as members are to contribute to the community funds, participate in assemblies and perform a series of increasingly prestigious political and religious functions. Upon performing their communal duties, ayllu members can access a proportional share of pastureland along with land to cultivate, and water to irrigate, in addition to having the right to participate in assemblies and festivities, and to propose or discuss community issues. They can acquire prestige through becoming community authorities and can have their demands and complaints attended to by the community authorities (Albó, Libermann et al. 1989, p. 47).

In 1993, supported by the THOA and other organizations, the CONAMAQ (The National Council of Ayllus of the Qullasuyu) was founded in a conscious effort to not only “preserve” the ayllu, but to strengthen it as a cultural, economic and political unit. The seven major organizations of the CONAMAQ group together many hundreds of ayllus in the Bolivian highlands. This is what the CONAMAQ website says about the ayllu:

The ayllus are original territories...before the arrival of the Spaniards there were no indigenous peoples, but rather great cultural formations with a high level of wisdom, in many cases much higher than that of the Europeans, who stopped [this process] using the sword, the cross and the horse. Invaders could not accept the ayllus' superiority as to their relation with nature, society and the universe. The Spaniards sought to create a difference, by calling us Indians, which

is where the differences began and finally, indigenous, where they tried to include us all in just one category, all of the cultures that had flourished before. In these great territories we communed with nature and conversed with the cosmos...

Before the arrival of the invaders to the territory of the Tawantinsuyu, we had our own system of political organization based on the land, on a productive economy, our own laws and cosmovision, with which we had a society based on life.

With the organization of colonial structures the organizational structures of the Qullasuyu have been dismantled and through the independent state organization of Bolivia, the ayllus and markas have continued to lose their structure. Because of the problems of marginalization and social and political exclusion of the indigenous peoples of the Qullasuyu, the Amazon and the Chaco, on the part of liberal minded authorities, we ourselves, the indigenous peoples have decided to organize to make our rights be known and respected.
(CONAMAQ webpage)

The ayllu as a mobilizing concept

As indigenous peoples in the last fifteen or twenty years have reached greater international visibility, there has also been a shift towards other ways to see and use the ideal of the ayllu within Bolivian indigenous politics. As Robert Andolina writes, the idea of the ayllu has gone from “local cultural paradigm to national political subject (2001, p. 146). The THOA had an important role in the promotion not only of the highland ayllus, but the idea of the ayllu.

Felipe Quispe, like many other Aymara intellectuals and leaders, proposes the ayllu-community system as “intrinsic to their political projects”; for Carlos Mamani Condori of the THOA the ayllu is “emancipatory”; for María Eugenia Choque, also of the THOA, “the return of the ayllu...is understood as a *pachakuti*, which means the return of our self-esteem and identity” (Albro, 2006, p. 399). According to Choque, for the CONAMAQ the use of ayllu principles to organize will signal a return to “lo que es

propio” (what is ours) and to living and working together, which brings “wealth”: the wealth of *suma qamaña*, “a good life” (2001, p. 119). Félix Patzi, sociologist and ex-Minister of Education for the current Morales government, proposed the ayllu as a social and economic model for the State (Patzi, 2006, p. 296-310). The sociologist and current Vice-president, Alvaro García Linera has also stated that “the ayllus need to be viewed as units of production, not only places to do social work. They need what any business in their situation would need: electricity, irrigation and better communication and transportation systems” (Interview by Parenti, Mother Jones, 2006).

Robert Andolina writes that before 1984 the ayllu had not been used as a principle for indigenous organizing, for development projects, or for state policy creation, but in 1991, after the march for Dignity and Territory of the lowland indigenous peoples, “the ayllu appeared ... as both a symbol of an alternative indigenous identity and as an alternative model for development”. Particularly after the creation of CONAMAQ in 1993, the ayllu has gained international recognition as an empowering tool to advocate for the rights of the Aymara. Within this context, a few European and North American NGOs have decided to provide financial support for the development of *ayllu* politics (Andolina et al, 2005). According to Robert Albro, collective identities have coalesced around ayllu-politics. They believe that elements of Andean cultural heritage will contribute to generate alternative discourses because “*ayllu* democracy” is a system that directly interrogates the democratic model now in place (2006, p. 397-399).

Is the CAUP a social movement?

The CAUP first self defines as a community, an ayllu-community, not as a social movement. However, a broad definition of social movements is that they are collective actions to promote or resist change. Touraine made this distinction: the so-called “new” social movements differ from the “old” in that the new ones are “based on the essential qualities of the oppressed – their race, sex, sexuality, regional experience, religion, age grouping”, whereas the former generally coincided “with democratic ideals and wanted them extended”, for example, women’s suffrage movements (Touraine, 1985, in Patton, 2006, pp. 224-225).

June Nash, in her *Introduction to Social Movements* (2005) relates social movements to the processes of globalization worldwide and the reactions of populations who feel threatened by these changes (p. 1). She classifies the causes that inspire social movements as the quests for human rights, for conservation of the environment, for public and personal autonomy, and for justice (p. 4).

On the other hand, Alberto Melucci stresses the cultural aspects and the pre-existing bonds between the members of these movements: “The notion of a social movement is an analytical category. It designates that form of collective action which (i) invokes solidarity, (ii) makes manifest a conflict and (iii) entails a breach of the limits of compatibility of the system within which the action takes place” (Melucci, 1996, p. 4). He adds: “[C]ontemporary ‘movements’ assume the form of solidarity networks entrusted with potent cultural meanings” (ibid). The members of the CAUP usually describe the

organization as an urban Aymara community, but in one of the two focus groups conducted with the CAUP Team members, one of them said:

This is a movement, but not a political or social one. It is not based on a policy of hatred to the q'ara because it does not originate in a feeling of resentment or hatred, but rather originates in the acknowledgement of an identity, which it practices, cultivates and expands and then leaves seeds. Therefore, that is the kind of movement that we are here in the CAUP.² (Qulla Uta member)

Another member of CAUP added, “We are a movement because we have ideology, because we seek change and we have even established a political line.”

The CAUP fosters collective action through the practice and the promotion of the ayllu- community; they seek change because they advocate for urban Aymaras' acknowledgement as indigenous people because they were not stripped of their heritage by having moved to the city. The CAUP is not only an “aggregate of persons”, it's a community based on close and meaningful interpersonal relations. This community is not a replica of the Andean ayllu, but an urban construction based on the habitus of the ayllu.

As was expressed in the main argument in the Introduction, throughout Bolivian history indigenous peoples have found ways to protest unfair conditions, exclusion and lack of rights, and also their own invisibility within the nation (except as unacknowledged participants in the advancement of other hegemonic agendas). While some of these indigenous grassroots movements are *demanding* change, others are *constructing* these changes with their own ideological and practical tools and organization and with the support of activists. The CAUP is one such case of construction.

The rural ayllu as a tool to build an urban community

The persistence of the ayllu-community in the Bolivian highlands runs like a thread through Aymara history from hegemonic practice to muted and underground practice and then to ideal and discourse. In recent years, particularly in the Western part of the country, it is also being discussed as a model to develop a more democratic national society. As will be further discussed in the following chapters, the grassroots organization of the CAUP has not attempted to replicate the rural ayllu-community, nor use the ayllu as rhetoric or use the ayllu-community as a weapon towards political mobilization. Rather, the CAUP uses the ayllu as a tool to construct an alternative kind of ayllu-community in the city. As will be further discussed in the section on “the ayllu-community habitus”, the women of the CAUP started using elements of the tradition of the ayllu-community because they were familiar with it, had grown up with it and have now taken this practice from a place of habitus to a level of greater awareness where they see its potential as a model for others.

The CAUP as an ayllu-community

The practices and the values of the ayllu-community are at the core of the CAUP model of organization. The CAUP version of community however, is not an idealization of the ayllu, nor the product of an intention to reproduce or copy a rural ayllu. The CAUP community does not derive validity or authenticity because it corresponds with a “checklist” of ayllu characteristics, but rather because it was generated by the early

CAUP members based on their own intuitions and habitus and because they consider it their “community”:

Community is not necessarily [linked to] territory. Community is also customs. What our community has salvaged is mostly how people organize in the countryside, how people help each other and how everything is shared among all. That is the essence of the ayllu and the CAUP has tried to salvage that form of organization and of resolving the problems that come up.³ (CAUP member)

The CAUP shares the spirit and most of the organizing principles of the ayllu. The territorial and productive base of the rural ayllu which allowed rural Andean peoples to survive in harsh conditions, and the source of their cosmovision, values and social practices is lacking in the city. The rural ayllu would be the origin of a habitus, based upon which the first CAUP members constructed their own community in an urban setting.

Before they organized as a group, the women migrants to the city, in particular, experienced isolation in their new environment. Accordingly, it can be said that the very creation of community was a statement of agency in the face of subalternity and the fate of remaining isolated, invisible and without a voice. The group identity and the name they chose, Warminakax Saranti (Women Who Move Forward) gave them an identity, a “voice” and a “face” with which to present and represent themselves. Their common needs, when positioned as needs that required solutions, framed their first steps towards agency.

The community form itself, rooted in the rural ayllu, was flexible, an adaptation that allowed the original CAUP members enough freedom to pursue their projects. It

allowed them to both continue to reproduce this form in each new CAUP group and also to incorporate change. This urban adaptation of the ayllu was a statement that alternative forms of organization, particularly rural forms, could be successful in the city.

The CAUP community is not based on an idealization; rather, as a non-member of the CAUP who is very familiar with their work said to me, the CAUP started out and continues to function on a human scale, where neither culture nor cultural elements are idealized. In this process, she said, and throughout its twenty five years of existence, the CAUP has managed to make significant contributions to the lives of its members. Not having reified images to live up to or complicated systems of information or leadership helped this community develop and grow, without frustrations, without proposing that people had to change to be able to make their lives better. The key was that the daily construction of community helped people help one another. And even though it might seem that people were simply enjoying sharing community and common concerns, that seemed to be what people really wanted, beyond utopias or abstract intellectualizations. This is what a member of the CAUP Team said about the CAUP in a focus group:

We called ourselves “community”, because this *zona* of Pampajasi has been inhabited by community members from the countryside; people needed a place to leave their children while they worked and so the daycare was created. And those same people needed a place where there were Aymara people to care for their grandparents and we made a place for the grandparents, like they do in the countryside. And then the health part came up, because Aymaras are not used to Western medicine and want a place for their traditional medicine and Qulla Uta happened. In the community orphans and the oldest members are always cared for and there is mutual collaboration and so Qulla Uta, the health center, Machaq Uta, the daycare and the Awichas are like a network, like a community and that’s where the name Community of Aymaras in the city comes from.⁴

The CAUP, a self-managed community

The awareness that this community is self-generated and self-managed is the most important source of pride for the CAUP community. The CAUP began to organize at a time when NGOs were combing city and countryside for “clients” and offering to sponsor projects. NGOs would write proposals, sell them to international donors and their central offices abroad, and then persuade potential beneficiaries to take advantage of these offers. Beneficiaries had nothing to do with the writing of the proposals, no prescribed role in their implementation and no control over the funds. A large percentage of the funds went to the overhead and salaries of the NGO employees. The NGOs had to justify to their funders the actions and expenses that took place in the projects through the step-by-step achievement of preset goals with quantifiable results. Some of the CAUP members had been participants in these projects and then left after seeing how little control they had over funds that were supposedly for them. They decided that they wanted to self-manage their own group as an ayllu-community, and that by working hard, managing their own money and being vigilant, they could avoid the corruption and dubious handling of resources that is common in large organizations. The main concern was independence, the freedom to decide about the funds. Don Mario, the yatiri of Qulla Uta, describes in a few words his sense of community, which is the foundation:

...Community is living together, eating together, talking, planning, sowing, helping each other...NGOs make people want handouts without real organization. That's why it has been important to salvage community. We have recovered that, by respecting people who don't know how to read. That's why I am here and I am happy. We don't need money. And if we do, we can go out and earn some [extra

money] and then start up again... Because there has been no corruption here [...] this has worked.⁵

When Don Mario talks about earning money and then starting up again, he is referring to the situation many of the CAUP Team are in: all except two have day jobs and work as volunteers for the CAUP. Don Mario himself now works for a program called *Salud Familiar y Comunitaria* within the Ministry of Health. However, he continues to work in Qulla Uta and to come to the Team meetings. He is finally earning a living wage, but still feels he must contribute to Qulla Uta with time and has volunteered a percentage of his salary to help support Qulla Uta.

Working through an NGO would have implied conditions and the CAUP preferred to work without that pressure. The knowledge that they have rejected funding when it entailed losing their autonomy is always a source of pride. The following quote by one of the mothers of Machaq Uta describes what happened a few years ago:

...the moms [of Machaq Uta] were going to receive funding but with the condition that they accept an outside administrator, a professional to handle their money, but the mothers have rejected this because they would have had to submit to the authority of another person. They wanted to continue being who they essentially are and we, as the CAUP, also seek the same thing. We will never do things that are outside of what we want to do, even if we are offered money, because our line has been drawn. That is the big difference between us and other organizations.⁶

To this Don Mario adds the following in referring to the “professionals” (the economists, development specialists, sociologists, anthropologists, etc., that are members or consultants to NGOs):

...those of us who are not professionals are looked down upon as if we were small, or animals. We are not valued. Only they [the professionals] have the right to speak. That is also why there are so many revolutions against the government. There are indigenous struggles all the time, indigenous wars [...], to change this system, because the Western system has hurt the Andean peoples and their communities for a long time. Some [indigenous] leaders sell themselves to the politicians and no longer guide the community, don't look out for it. They hide away, receive their money and remain silent.⁷

In Western Bolivia, the word “community” can be synonymous with “ayllu”, depending on who uses it. If a “white” person uses the word “community”, it just means a group of people with a common purpose and similar values. If an Aymara person uses the word “community”, it means “ayllu”, a kind of community which is the basic unit of Andean society. One member of the CAUP Team clarified that to translate “ayllu” as “community” is not really accurate because “ayllu is more than a community. It is composed of families and only exists in its original form in the Departments of Oruro and Potosí...whereas the community of urban Aymaras in Pampajasi is no longer a community based on territory: “it only retains the organizational part; without that form of organization, it would disappear, the CAUP would disappear, that is its base”.⁸

Another CAUP member confirmed that the CAUP ayllu-community holds some organizational components in common with the ayllu communities in the countryside, such as the rotating system of authorities, interactions based on reciprocity, the ayni and also equality:

... [Authority] is rotational because for example in the daycare the mothers that leave their children and have been there for a while, must become part of the Board. All of the mothers that come must be part of the Board so that all of them learn to manage the daycare and so that all of them have a sense of responsibility

for the daycare, even if some of them would rather not do it. Then they will learn and they will tend to value the daycare more. The other base is reciprocity and the other the *ayni* [Andean system of exchange on equivalent terms]. I can tell it's going on because sometimes I see that the Awichas have more funding and some is left over, so they send that money over to the children, because with what the parents pay they can't make it. In the same way, if in Machaq Uta there is something left over, like flour, some food, it is also sent over, for Qulla Uta, for the Awichas. That is a base. What would it be like, if the daycare had a lot of funding and they didn't want to share! There'd be a clash, because in the countryside everybody thinks that either there is some for everybody, or nobody gets any. There is equality. In the countryside that is how things are managed, despite the unions. If the authorities don't handle things like that there are problems, they'll fight and there will be problems.⁹

Therefore, the ayllu-community is more than a community because it is the unit based on family and on territorial rights and obligations upon which the Andean people were organized, and because it embodies all the Andean values. The ayllu-community of CAUP does not have a territorial base, but it uses its organizational part, its values and practices.

Mercedes Zerda, strategic supporter of CAUP, also confirmed that the term "community" within an indigenous context implies more than the formal Spanish term, "community". It can actually be used to describe any native, indigenous form of organization:

Community is not used within the universal sense of the word, community is not where people live. Here, community can refer to the indigenous, native community, the organizational form of the Aymara, Quechua or lowland people.¹⁰

How it is described and what others would call it is less important than the fact that it works, says Javier Mendoza, psychologist and also longtime supporter of the

CAUP. What matters is that the people themselves came up with this form, they perfected it, adjusted it to their needs and will continue to incorporate other elements as needed, to keep the organization going. A CAUP Team member said in a focus group:

In that sense, what has happened here in Pampajasi is that there was no community, only neighbors who had come in from the countryside and who lived in an urban way. It was not an ayllu, but through the initiative of creating a daycare, [and] an Awicha group, the important thing was the way they organized. People organize as Aymaras, because that's what they have in their hearts. So that's how the community was put together, it has become an urban community. It is not exactly the same as a rural community [...] It is the same in the essential parts, but many parts of it are adapted to Western life. Therefore, we are a particular kind of community in that we can do very urban, very Western things, using the tools of the native cultures.¹¹

Other CAUP members mentioned that the social practices of the ayllu-community have been fed into the community by the members, first because that is what they carried in their habitus, or, as was expressed in the previous quote, "in their hearts", and through conscious acts of reinforcement, particularly with the children in the daycare.

The ayllu-community habitus

Pierre Bourdieu is the creator of the concept of the habitus, which he describes as:

[the] system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express matter of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53)

When people act without apparently reflecting on it, when they seem to automatically “know” how to proceed, that is the manifestation of habitus, says Peter Jenkins. Jenkins stresses that the habitus is a “generative basis of practices” (2002, p. 79), “a shared body of dispositions, classificatory categories and generative schemes [and] is, if nothing else, the outcome of collective history: ‘the habitus’ a product of history, produces individual and collective practices – more history – in accordance with the schemes generated by history” (Jenkins quoting Bourdieu, 2002, p. 80).

In order to create a daycare in Pampajasi, the first migrant groups of women that organized did so using the habitus of the ayllu-community that they brought with them to the city. By using a system that was familiar to them and was part of their habitus, the women of Pampajasi took a first step towards agency and towards their self-empowerment.

This habitus of ayllu-community is not only a loosely connected grouping of memories or recipes or preferences, it is a family and territory-based system with deep resonances and complexities that underlie daily life in many rural areas. Where they are partially or fully functional, as in the departments¹² of La Paz, Oruro, and Potosí, ayllu-communities are systems that, from a practical and ethical standpoint, condition the life of their members, the systems of production and distribution of wealth, the systems of responsibility and privileges, the interactions within and among families, and the hierarchies and values.

The use of the Aymara language in the CAUP groups has contributed to the survival of the ayllu-community habitus, because the concept itself is embodied in the language:

Language is not only a vehicle for expression but a filter for reality. We classify everything through language. It makes you think in certain ways. A person who learns how to speak in Aymara classifies everything in a way which is absolutely different from someone who learns how to speak in Spanish [...] your conception of the world, your internal self, what you are, is determined by your language. (Interview, Javier Mendoza)

One example of how language contains different perceptions of reality is found in the study titled *With the Future Behind Them: Convergent Evidence from Aymara Language and Gesture in the Crosslinguistic Comparison of Spatial Construals of Time* in which the contrasting perceptions of present, past and future tenses in Aymara speakers and Spanish speakers are explored, along with their consequences in everyday life. Aymara people are interviewed about events taking place in the past and are filmed and photographed as they consistently use hand motions to speak of the past as situated “ahead”, “before your eyes” because “you can see it”, whereas you cannot see what will happen in the future and therefore, it is “behind” you. The future tense does not exist in the Aymara language (Núñez & Sweetser, 2006, 1-46).

Another example which illustrates how we can be misled into thinking that a single word means the same thing to different people is the concept of poverty for Aymara families, which is related to the lack of family. Lack of money is an eventuality, but real poverty is related to being orphaned or not having children.

Language is the main tool that we use to communicate, but since each culture “wraps” its concepts in language, when people who speak different languages communicate, they must bridge many gaps, gaps in which the same words may have different cultural contents. Within the CAUP, the use of the Aymara language helps preserve Aymara concepts and an Aymara habitus.

Bourdieu admitted that the concept of the habitus implied little agency, but he also rejected interpretations of the habitus that were deterministic and self-perpetuating (Connell, in Jenkins, 2002, p. 118). He argued that the habitus could be transformed by the “awakening of consciousness” (2002, p. 83), but did not explain how this would take place. Based on the CAUP experience, I propose that a rural habitus can be a safe haven in life altering situations such as migration to the new environment of the city through the creation of a new group identity that incorporates elements of the habitus. Upon the use of this rural habitus in the city, the habitus of group members expands to include more elements of the urban environment.

Also exploring the topic of the habitus and of change, Alvaro García Linera has suggested that the habitus of the dominated classes in Bolivia includes agency because it includes a memory of resistance to dominion, a memory of alternating autonomy and submission (García Linera, 2000, p. 103).

The role of the strategic supporters of the CAUP has been that of catalysts because they accompanied the process of Warminakax Saranti and then the process of the subsequent groups as each made use of their own habitus of ayllu-community, directed towards agency.

Endnotes:

¹ Original in Spanish:

“Doña Nemesia: Nosotras tenemos buen entendimiento porque nos conocemos, nos organizamos bien y nos unimos.

Doña Vicky: En ‘Warminakax Saranti’ estamos organizadas bien porque sábado a sábado no tenemos discusiones. Aquí en el grupo tenemos un solo pensamiento...

Dona Nemesia: La mayoría tenemos un solo pensamiento porque tenemos mucha amistad, nos conocemos y nos entendemos. Al comienzo había diferentes pensamientos, pero a uno sólo hemos pensado y todas hemos trabajado para el grupo.

Dona Fermina: [...] en este grupo hablamos puro aymara y entendemos todas las cosas.”

² Original in Spanish: “Este es un movimiento, pero no político o social, no es en base a una política o el odio al q’ara porque no parte de un sentimiento de resentimiento ni de odio, sino que parte del reconocimiento de una identidad, que la practican, la cultivan y la expanden y que a partir de eso dejan semillas. Entonces ese tipo de movimiento somos los del CAUP.”

³ Original in Spanish: “No necesariamente comunidad es territorio. Es también las costumbres. Lo que se ha rescatado en esta comunidad es más que todo como se organizan en el campo, como se ayudan, y como todo es para todos. Es el ayllu que tiene esa esencia, y el CAUP ha tratado de rescatar esa forma de organización y de cómo resolver los problemas que se puedan tener.”

⁴ Original in Spanish: “Hemos puesto por comunidad, por que esta zona de Pampajasi ha sido poblado por comunarios del campo. La necesidad de la gente era un lugar donde dejar sus wawas mientras trabajaban, y así se creó la guardería, y esa misma gente...La comunidad necesitaba un lugar donde haya esa misma gente aymara donde tengan a sus abuelitos y hemos abierto un lugar para los abuelos, como en el campo. Y luego surgió lo de la salud, como los aymaras no están acostumbrados a la medicina occidental y quieren un lugar de su medicina tradicional, ha surgido Qulla Uta. En la comunidad siempre se acoge a los huérfanos y a los mas viejos entonces hay colaboración mutua, entonces Qulla Uta (centro de salud), Machaq Uta (guardería) y las Awichas es como un red como una comunidad, por eso el nombre de comunidad de aymaras en la ciudad.”

⁵ Original in Spanish: “...comunidad sería vivir juntos, comer juntos, hablar, planificar, sembrar, ayudarse mutuamente...las ONG hacen que la gente quiera regalo sin organizarse. Por eso ha sido bien importante rescatar la comunidad, ya hemos recuperado, respetar al gente que no sabe leer, y por eso estoy aquí, estoy feliz, no necesitamos plata, y nos falta plata, nos vamos a trabajar también, despues ya retornamos también...por eso funciona, gracias a que no ha habido corrupción como en el sindicalismo, esto ha funcionado.”

⁶ Original in Spanish: “Las mamás iban a tener financiamiento, a condición de que tengan un administrador, un profesional, pero las mamás han rechazado, porque se iban a someter a la autoridad de otra persona, porque ellas iban a seguir siendo lo que son en esencia. Y nosotros como CAUP también buscamos eso, nunca vamos a hacer cosas fuera de nuestra querencia, aunque nos ofrezcan dinero, porque nuestra línea estratégica, esa es la gran diferencia con otras instituciones.”

⁷ Original in Spanish: “...a los no profesionales nos miran como chiquito, como animales, no nos valoran, ellos nomás tienen derecho a hablar. Por eso también hay mucha revolución contra los gobernantes, cada vez que se levanta la lucha indígena, la guerra indígena para defender, para cambiar este sistema, porque el sistema occidental siempre ha dañado al pueblo andino o comunidad. Hace tiempo, los dirigentes son vendidos a los políticos, ya no orientan a la comunidad, no avisan. Se esconden nomás, la plata reciben y callan.”

⁸ Original in Spanish: “... Sólo sería la parte organizativa, sin esa forma de organización se pierde, el CAUP se pierde, esa es la base.”

⁹ Original in Spanish: “...[la autoridad] es rotativa, por ejemplo en la guardería las mamás que dejan a sus hijos y son antiguos tienen que formar la mesa directiva, toda mamá que llega tiene que ser parte de la mesa directiva para que todas aprendan a manejar la guardería y que todas tengan ese sentimiento de responsabilidad de la guardería, aunque algunas no quieran, pero saben y tienden a valorizar más la guardería. La otra base sería la reciprocidad, y el otro es el “ayni”, aunque no se, yo noto que hay, yo veo a veces que las Awichas tienen más dinero de financiamiento que les sobra, ese dinero mandan para los niños, porque lo que los papás dan no alcanza. Igualmente, que de la Machaq Uta sobra algo, como la harina, comida, igualmente se manda, para la Qulla Uta para las Awichas, eso es una base, que tal si la guardería tuviera mucho financiamiento, y no quisieran compartir, habría un choque, y también en el campo se piensa que es para todos o sino para nadie. Hay igualdad. En el campo se maneja así a pesar del sindicalismo, y cuando hay autoridades que no manejen así, tendrán problemas, se pelearán y habrá problemas.”

¹⁰ Original in Spanish: “Comunidad no se usa en el sentido universal, la comunidad no es el lugar en el que vive la gente, aquí es la comunidad originaria nativa indígena, la forma organizativa de los pueblos Aymara, Quechua o de la selva.”

¹¹ Original in Spanish: “En ese sentido lo que ha pasado aquí en Pampajasi es que no existía una comunidad, sólo había vecinos que habían llegado del campo, que vivían de una forma urbana. No era una comunidad, pero a partir de las iniciativas de hacer el centro infantil, las Awichas, lo importante fue la forma de organización, por que la gente se organiza como aymara, porque lo lleva en el corazón. Entonces se fue creando la comunidad, se ha fabricado una comunidad urbana. No es igual que una comunidad rural

[...] es igual en lo esencial, pero tiene muchas cosas adaptadas a la vida occidental. Entonces somos una comunidad muy peculiar, que podemos hacer cosas muy urbanas, muy occidentales, usando las herramientas de las culturas nativas.”

¹² Bolivia is divided into departments and the departments in provinces. Bolivia has nine departments: La Paz, Oruro, Potosi in the highlands; Tarija, Chuquisaca, Cochabamba in the valleys; and Beni, Santa Cruz and Pando in the lowlands.

CHAPTER VI

COMMUNITY AND AGENCY

While the population of Bolivia is mostly *mestiza*, or racially mixed, in their daily lives and interactions with others people tend to identify either as indigenous, or as not indigenous, playing off of the duality that has existed since the Spanish colonization. In the present day city of La Paz the Aymara identity of migrants is challenged by urban customs and institutions that, in general, dissociate from the indigenous “pole” and gravitate towards the more globalized, “white”, hegemonic “pole”. While some migrants give in to the pressure to adapt to this “white pole”, and try to bury their rural Aymara roots, others resist and try to retain them.

CAUP members have found a way to constructively resist the pressure to reject their Aymara heritage by becoming a group. They have organized using the habitus of the ayllu-community to overcome conditions of subalternity and isolation so that they can regain their strength and their sense of self value from within Aymara culture and practices and in the face of the urban society that discriminates against them. In this way their heritage and tradition work to resolve common practical needs and the need for positive self-identification through a common practice of community. The CAUP community provides for its members food, health services, sometimes shelter, and also

safety, empowerment, a sense of belonging and the ability to live in the city without feeling that they have to renounce to their Aymara heritage to do so.

Agency: power and resistance

Agency is at the core of the CAUP's work. It is part of the "package" of their ayllu-community in the city. Agency is the power to do and to be, the capacity to "come into your own", individually or collectively, and to figure out how to get what you want (Ortner, 1994, p. 369).

Agency is related to change and to choice. According to Sherry Ortner, Marshall Sahlins says that "change [...] is failed reproduction", because change can happen within a cultural group through the attempt to take in new information using traditional concepts. Conversely, in the case of the CAUP, it can be argued that change can happen in larger society by *successfully* reproducing – with appropriate modifications – a traditional model within a different context: a rural system of organization applied to an urban, "modern" context. In that case, larger society would be the one to fail to reproduce, and urban Aymara people and their issues would have the opportunity to be seen in a different light.

Stuart Hall, according to Lawrence Grossberg, proposes a theory of agency that originates in "a fragmented, de-centred human agent, an agent that is both 'subject-ed by power and capable of acting against those powers'" (Grossberg, 1996, 156-7). On a societal level, according to Sherry Ortner, agency and action allow us to see society "as a

system [which] is powerfully constraining and yet can be made and unmade through human action and interaction” (Ortner, 1994).

In a more recent book, Sherry Ortner describes agency as having a double meaning, as power and as resistance. She interrogates the agency of individuals who are immersed in social networks that have the capacity to mold individual agency. She also mentions how some “empowered agents” seem to have more agency than others, how agency is different within each culture, and how agency and empowerment finally come down to being able to follow through with the intention to embark on a project that makes sense to the social actor (Ortner, 2006, 127-153).

The concept of agency and of a “doer”, an “agent, actor, person, self, individual, subject” (Ortner, p. 388, 1994) first appeared connected to ideas of change, the empowerment of social subjects, and to theories of practice in the 1980s. This is roughly when the study of the “new” social movements began to appear on the radar of the social sciences. The notion of agency is important to be able to describe empowerment through representation, the construction of individual and collective identities, and of social movements. The study of social movements places agency within the collective subject.

The concept of agency is the common thread underlying all of the theories that constitute the theoretical framework of this thesis. Agency is generated as a result of affective bonds, a collective identity, and common needs that require solutions, all of which constitute the force behind mobilization for change within social movements. Agency is both a component and the result of efforts of strategic essentialism, geared towards change through collective action. Agency is the active principle that

differentiates the empowered subject from the subalternized one. In a focus group a CAUP Team member reflected:

...maybe in the beginning they [the original group of women organizers] didn't really value what they had among themselves, but little by little they gained assurance and they gained the power to feel that they are the base, that our culture is alive and that now it will rise up with more strength.¹

When the CAUP members began to see the fruit of their labor, the child and senior care groups, they became aware of the potential of their ayllu-community habitus. Through the years, as they have been invited to describe their experience to other grassroots groups, NGOs, funders, and researchers, the awareness of their sense of agency has multiplied, through the recounting of their individual and collective histories and the awareness of the mores of the ayllu-community as a model for other Aymara and non-Aymara groups. This chapter will expand on the description of individual and group agency within CAUP.

The beginning of community was the beginning of agency

How much individual members become immersed in the CAUP community depends on their individual needs and choices. When individual people and families first knocked on the doors of Machaq Uta, of Qulla Uta, or of the Awichas, it was mostly to access the services they provided. To access these services, they were required to comply with the requirements of being part of the Awicha or Machaq Uta community. For example, in the early days, as many of the CAUP members recall, in order to belong to

the Machaq Uta Daycare, mothers had to put in three months of unpaid work for the group before they could join, to make up for the hard work the others had already put in to make the Daycare exist. They were also expected to show up for work at 5:00 a.m. Now conditions have relaxed and potential members are expected to come to the meetings for a period of time to learn how it all works before they apply and caretakers show up at 7:30 a.m., about half an hour or an hour before the children start to arrive.

As the new members begin to participate in the meetings, they share in the system of rotating leadership, in community events and contribute to the community with money and work. They develop a sense of ownership. Through their participation and contributions, new members activate the social mechanisms of community and they receive the solidarity and emotional support of the other members. This support allows migrant families to find their feet and feel more secure, in addition to providing a practical means to resolve some of the problems of their everyday existence. As one of the CAUP Team members said to me:

A lot of people came in from the countryside and their lives have changed a great deal...living here and belonging to the CAUP has provided them with a different perspective of things and also helped them to not feel discriminated against. In the Daycare this has been reinforced because they, as people from the countryside, were despised and not given a fair place within the city. This is like a seed.²

Emotional support is important, particularly so for urban Aymara senior citizens. With few exceptions, these senior citizens were destitute and suffered from feelings of isolation and hopelessness when they first approached the Awicha groups. But once their membership was secured by their own contributions to it, they felt safer and could begin

re-contacting society and exercising agency from a perspective of well-being. This quote from a young member of the CAUP illustrates a similar sentiment:

Being part of the CAUP has been very useful to me. In the CAUP I have learned how to live as a community, all together and that is useful for my social life, for my life out on the streets, at work...now I see that I have learned more here...I am no less than my bosses, they say something and I can say no if it doesn't work for me, not like others that accept anything as long as they don't lose their jobs.³ (Volunteer with the Machaq Uta children)

Most awichas comply with their obligations in their Awicha groups, have active social lives, shop, plan for trips, and interact with neighbors, clients, volunteers, students, and local authorities. The community is a safe haven for group members, but also a springboard that allows members to reconnect with society from a place of confidence.

Senior citizens feel alone, but when they are integrated into a group, even "if it's only to fight amongst themselves", as they say, they also feel psychologically safe. Sometimes their problems are solved...Aymara people need to feel a sense of inclusion.⁴ (M. Zerda)

The CAUP has not incorporated all of the prescribed or "by the book" characteristics of existing rural ayllu-communities, such as the territorial base, and the male and female moieties, for example, just the ones that worked best for them in the city and which were related to social interaction, as is shown in Table 4. These ayllu-community practices have strengthened the sense of commitment, belonging, and ownership of the members towards their CAUP community and have allowed them to

feel empowered. The use of music, coca, rituals, and multigenerational activities also brings people closer together and in that sense also promotes well-being and agency.

In Table 4 the “practices” are specific tools that the CAUP members use in their groups to construct community in an ayllu-community way. The ones mentioned most often in the interviews were the assembly, rotating leadership, decision making by consensus, social control, transparency and accountability, and the joint control of funds.

In the second column are the values of respect, equality, participation, solidarity, and reciprocity, which are ideals that the CAUP members mentioned extensively and which they try to apply to all of their activities and interpersonal relations. More than specific activities, they reflect positive attributes that are an integral part of a solid community. These attributes include respect among members, particularly of the senior members of the group, equality of obligations and rights, participation in decision making, and work. Solidarity and reciprocity are also valued among all of the members, which can also extend to all nonmembers in need that the community wishes to help. In the third column are the results or benefits of the practices and values of community: practical needs being met, emotional support, belonging, ownership and pride, dignity, agency and empowerment, and finally, sustainability. Community as the CAUP has constructed it includes these elements which interact with each other.

Table 4 illustrates how the practices and the values of community contribute towards practical and subjective benefits, which include agency and empowerment.

TABLE 4. Ayllu-community practices and values utilized by the CAUP, and benefits of these practices and values in the city

PRACTICES	VALUES	BENEFITS
SOCIAL TOOLS FOR AYLLU-COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT: General assemblies Yearly rotating leadership Decision making through consensus, one-by-one consultation Conflict resolution Community control Transparency and accountability	Respect Equality	Practical needs being met Emotional support
GENERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF FUNDS Participation in income generating ventures for the group Joint savings and control of funds	Participation Solidarity Reciprocity Work	Belonging Well-being Ownership and pride Dignity
RESOURCES TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY Multigenerational activities in which the children learn from their elders Traditional music and dance Ritual and the use of coca Memory		Acknowledgement Agency and empowerment Sustainability

In the next section, the practices and values of ayllu-community organizing will be discussed in more detail. Also discussed will be how these practices and values generate positive results for the community, including agency and empowerment.

Social tools for ayllu-community management

General assemblies

General assemblies, which are always on the same fixed dates and times, are an important part of the fabric of this urban ayllu-community. The three components of CAUP and the CAUP Team hold general assemblies and pre-scheduled activities each week, each month, each year, for which members can set aside time and prepare.

Meetings serve the purpose of reconnecting, touching base with one another, and maintaining an environment of communication and well-being. The roll call among the awichas, for example, serves to call attention to those who are present and those who are absent. Members talk about the sick, the dying, and the members on leave. They compare notes and see what they can do. The meetings serve the purpose of sharing personal and general information, opinions and concerns, serve to plan and assess their activities, make decisions, and air out and settle conflicts. Financial matters are discussed and settled weekly and monthly and annual evaluations are made. The income generating activities in all the groups are planned in these meetings and all aspects of the work are discussed. Seasonal events and festivities are planned. Meeting times are flexible and the environment is usually social and relaxed, more so in the Awicha groups. The Machaq Uta meetings are more “businesslike”, perhaps because they take place in the evenings, after work, when the moms and dads are tired, or perhaps because more of the participants are more second and third generation migrants.

The format for the meetings in Machaq Uta is as follows. People start arriving roughly at the time of the meeting and chat. The women seem to talk among themselves

more than with the men, or than the men among themselves. The teenagers of both sexes hang around in groups, sitting or standing, and talk and laugh quietly. When most members have arrived, regardless of the specific hour, the meeting begins by unspoken consensus and everyone is quiet.

In the Awicha group meetings they often have prepared a sweet beverage out of boiled fruit which is cooling in a bucket with a dipper in it. The president or someone in charge, usually a woman, will go around serving everyone from the same small glass. Once the Awicha meeting starts, there is a roll call and questions are asked about the whereabouts of those who have been absent for a long time. For short term absences it is a requirement to send word through another member or to request permission in advance for a trip. The dues are paid and an order of the day written down. The *directiva*, or board, presides over the meetings. In the Awicha groups the coordinator, Marisol Surculento, provides a little backup to keep discussions on track. Primarily she oversees the finances around the income-generating activities and helps the members keep track of their records. In both Machaq Uta and the Awicha groups, meetings last around three hours but can last more if there are still issues left to resolve. Qulla Uta also has a meeting day in which the members present do their accounting and take care of issues related to patients, discuss the progress of the translation of Don Mario's book, his outreach work in the media, and his work with the Ministry of Health.

General assemblies allow more democratic participation. The ayllu-organization format also allows for different levels of decision making, in which after the main assembly has reached consensus, a few delegated grassroots members can get together in

an assembly among themselves. They hear what others have brought from their own grassroots levels, go back to the grassroots to consult, and then return to the delegate members' assembly with more input. The process is slow, but all of the members are heard. When quicker responses are needed, respecting the different consultation processes can be cumbersome.

Yearly rotating leaderships

The yearly rotating leadership within the groups, Machaq Uta, the CAUP Team, and the Awichas, is one of the most visible practices of ayllu-community and has built-in mechanisms for the agency and empowerment of the members. This is an ayllu-community organizing tool, which is at the same time considered an obligation, a service, and also a privilege. As members invest in the group it strengthens their commitment, they learn new skills, and increase their knowledge of how the community works. This practice empowers individual members and strengthens the community.

Through the practice of rotating leadership in the Machaq Uta daycare, for example, the moms get to know how it all works, to see how this daycare is different from other daycares, and they acquire a sense of responsibility and ownership.

In the Awicha groups, the group decides whose turn it is to be president. Often the first reaction of the chosen president or vice-president of each of the six groups is to reject the nomination, skip the responsibility. Instead, the group encourages their new nominee to take it on, tells them that they will be supported all the way, and that they will not be alone. Each salient board helps the new board to find its feet. Leadership will give

the person prestige, but first and foremost, it is an obligation to their group. The group gently assures the elected authorities for the year that they'll do fine, they'll receive all the coaching and support of the previous occupants of those posts, but reminds them that it is their obligation. Individual qualifications do not matter. I noticed that the newer members tended to be "voted in" sooner.

Don Noel Zapana was the president of the Alto Pampajasi Awicha group when I visited them in 2006. Don Noel told me that elections are held every January and that each person is president for a year. I asked how many in the group had been president already and most had. "It's not important that you know all about it...", said Don Noel, "...because you learn as you go."

Don Mario, the yatiri who works at the Qulla Uta Healing Center and is now working at the Ministry of Health, told me that yearly rotating leaderships allow people to learn to assume responsibilities for the group and to learn to listen and follow the group's bidding. When I asked, how about innovation, if there was any room for it, he explained that in the Aymara ayllu-communities, when major issues are at stake, decisions are made by a group of wise elders or *Amautas*, usually men, that represent all of the ayllus from the *marka* or region. They consult their groups and confer among themselves until a decision is reached. Women are more often leaders of women's groups and movements.

Mercedes Zerda mentioned that occasionally young leaders stand out in the greater Aymara community and people acknowledge their leadership qualities. This has happened recently with a young Aymara leader in Copacabana. Felipe Quispe, an

Aymara leader from the town of Achacachi on the La Paz highlands, is another such leader. He transcended the local levels of authority and acted as an ideological and political innovator. He presented his candidacy for President in the 2002 elections.

Yearly rotating leaderships within each group and each component keep each small community going. The group watches closely to support the new leaders and helps avoid corruption through community control. These leaders are not paid money. Their incentive is to do a good job for the sake of their prestige within the group so that they will be remembered for what was accomplished during their term. Their responsibilities include roll calling, presiding over the weekly meetings, collecting the weekly dues, receiving their monthly funds, accounting for the funds each month, and representing the group at meetings elsewhere, such as the Senior Citizen Council, the City offices, etc. Sometimes, particularly in hard times or in special situations, a leader is elected for more than one year, but one year is considered the norm. Yearly rotating leaderships are about gaining agency and prestige through learning how to listen to the group and how to manage its affairs.

One example of this took place during the celebration of a new Awicha group anniversary. One day in late August 2006, a group of Pampajasi awichas who each represented their group, plus some volunteers from each one, climbed on a bus and traveled two hours from Pampajasi to go Senkata, an outlying area of the city of El Alto where the propane gas plant is, on the highland plateau. Senkata, like all of El Alto, is very high, dry, dusty, and windy, and the sun burns intensely. A new Senkata Awicha group had started organizing two years before under the protection of the Pampajasi

Awichas who diverted some of their funds to help this group on its way. The Senkata group was celebrating their second anniversary and they didn't have a meeting room of their own. They had just purchased a big pot, a drum, a few metal cups, and a propane container with the money passed on to them by the Pampajasi Awichas. They had invited the Pampajasi groups to celebrate their anniversary with them and show them what they had bought with their money, all things to be used to bind the group together. Benches had been set up in a spot in the vast expanse behind the houses, under flags and colorful textiles or *awayos*, for this special occasion. After the speeches of the Senkata president, vice president and of the Senkata members, the Pampajasi Awichas were invited to address the group. The following is taken from my notes:

One by one, most of the Pampajasi Awichas stood up, 14 people, men and women, and they walked up to the front and stood in line until it was their turn to address the group. Most spoke in Aymara, a few in Spanish, to give the new group advice on how to manage their group. The first to speak was a soft-spoken, slender lady with white hair who had recently become president of the Kupini group. When I had visited two or three weeks prior, I could see how insecure she still was about the accounting, the roll calling and about how to organize things and how she depended on the other members, like Don Eusebio, for guidance. And yet here she was, addressing perhaps 150 people, saying, "I am new at this. I just joined the group four years ago, but I have heard from the others how hard it was to start our group, how hard they had to fight to make things as they are now. Now I am the president of my group and I am learning. You can also learn. Don't give up."

Compliance with the rotating leadership obligation can enhance agency through resourcefulness, as even the very old, the deaf, and those who are not all there can be elected as *directivas* of their groups. There is no specific order in which people are called upon to be leaders for that year. Members anticipate that their turn is coming soon, and

prepare for it. One name and then another comes up at the beginning of each calendar year, of people who have not yet complied with this obligation or haven't complied in recent years, and each is consulted.

Marisol Surculento, who is a CAUP Team member and the coordinator for the Awicha groups, told me the story of Doña Maria Karwani, from one of the Awicha groups. She was very old and had been elected president of her group. She didn't quite understand what was going on when she went to the monthly meetings with other senior citizen organizations because she spoke very little Spanish, but she figured out how to bring back a notebook with notes from each meeting. Since Marisol knew that Doña Maria did not read and write, she asked her about these notes. Doña Maria told her that she had found someone who did know how to read and write at these meetings and had asked them to jot down the main ideas, so she could later have them read aloud to her Awicha group by someone else and so comply with her responsibilities towards her group.

Regarding the CAUP as a whole, Mercedes Zerda explained to me that they have one main representative of all three CAUP components together, which is elected every two years. That representative is chosen in a general assembly in which two or three "grassroots" members of each of the ten urban and rural Awicha groups, of Machaq Uta and of Qulla Uta are present, plus the directivas (the three or four yearly rotating board members) of each and the CAUP Team (people like the bookkeeper, the music professor, the Awicha coordinator), about fifty people in all. The first person elected for this role was Don Juanito Quispe, a very senior and longtime member of the Awichas and now it

is Don Mario, the yatiri of Qulla Uta. The next person elected has to come, because it is their turn, from Machaq Uta and will probably be a woman. In that way, by rotation, each component of the CAUP has an opportunity to look out for the organization, counsel the members, and represent them. The main representative is the “voice” of the organization. They do not speak as an individual for the group. Rather, they have to consult *con las bases*, with “the base” about each issue and convey those decisions back. In this way, the ayllu precepts of equality, participation, and rotating leadership are also present in the CAUP, in all of its components, and its groups.

Decision making through consensus

Participation in the CAUP groups is taking part in joint decision making and problem solving. Making decisions implies taking responsibility and also learning how to hear others, weigh what they have to say, speaking up in public, not fearing to dissent, and being able to reach consensus. Members do not only vote by raising their hands or marking a piece of paper so “a majority” can be reached. Rather, each individual person is consulted and each person states their opinion. In that way, when the entire circle of people has had the opportunity to speak, the whole group is better informed as to all of the ways in which the situation can be seen and it becomes clearer to everyone what the best option seems to be. Everyone has the opportunity to contribute to the pool of information and to the decision. Agency and empowerment are taking place as people are not only allowed, but encouraged, indeed made to, participate, have an opinion, and a vote. Nolberto Quispe, one of the caretakers said,

[Machaq Uta] is like a community [...] there is no boss, no leaders, it is like a little town here. They elect their own authorities, like in the little towns in the highlands. And even the young people have the custom of getting together like that, the same as the mothers do [...] The mothers can decide and the children can decide.⁵

In Machaq Uta, parents are chided for not speaking up in a meeting. Most of them are there because it is a condition of having their children in Machaq Uta. Around forty parents and their various children come in at about 8:00 p.m. Mondays and talk quietly among themselves until the meeting begins, with the yearly rotating parent board presiding. Comments like “Doña Juana, we heard you talking the other day to another mom about giving snacks to the children. Speak up now in the meeting, so we can all hear what you think”, are common. Moms also bring up gripes between them, about the food, or supplies, and everything is aired out in public. Indeed, it is the women that keep the decision making through consensus alive. They bring up more practical issues and participate more than the men.

Individual democratic participation as it is practiced in the ayllu-community style is empowering to the members. The individual one by one consultation process enables the more quiet and less outspoken members to formulate an opinion and thus contribute to the discussion. Voicing dissent or a complaint is more empowering because it allows the person to be heard and a solution to be found for their problem. However, participation differs greatly between the groups, and most notably between urban and rural groups. I observed that in the rural groups the men did most of the talking, particularly in one of the groups (Belén). In another rural group, Huakuyo, the women

spoke up almost as often as the men. However, the men tended to stand during the meetings and the women mostly to sit. In rural Kusijata, while the very elderly Awicha leader spoke and was listened to with respect, the young male leader of the Kusijata community spoke more lengthily after her, about practical matters such as to how to coordinate with the large Awicha group. In the meantime everyone ate the copious meal that the women had cooked. In the urban groups the degree of participation of men and women also differed in each group and according to the topic, but in general the women spoke up, complained more than the men, and both men and women came up with new ideas. In Machaq Uta the women also did almost all of the talking while the men listened gravely.

Conflict resolution

As CAUP members explained to me, sweeping problems under the carpet only meant they would come back again. The general meetings, or assemblies, are places in which both men and women voice their complaints and then argue back and forth until a solution can be carved out. Group members want and need harmony and peace, so they discuss, indeed argue, about issues until they can reach a settlement that everyone can live with. I was told many times, “We Aymaras are feisty people, we fight all the time.” But “fighting”, confronting, arguing, allows the other person to respond and express disagreement. Situations are settled in public, trying to allow both sides to save face and continue working together. The other group members listen to what is said and if they have a contribution to make, speak up to help clarify the problem. Several Awichas said

to me, “We do well together because we have learned how to argue (*pelear*).” The goal of the discussions is to reestablish balance and clear communications between each other, not to create rifts. Discussions cannot go beyond certain limits and it is important to know those limits. For a productive confrontation to happen, participants have to state the problem and then be open to fight back and eventually make concessions so the matter can be settled with as few bad feelings as possible.

I believe that this fighting to reestablish balance and harmony is not an example of what has been called “negative reciprocity” by some authors, such as Dominique Temple and Jacqueline Michaux (2003), in which if you cannot connect as friends, you do so as enemies. Aggressive exchanges keep parties connected, but in permanent feud. War is an example of negative reciprocity. I believe that the CAUP groups are not unusual in that they need harmony within. If they could not provide harmony and support to their members, individual people would seek it elsewhere. I have heard people in the CAUP assemblies tell each other not to give up and to continue insisting until they feel that they are satisfied. In the urban groups the women seem to do most of the arguing. They tend to speak in a tone that is controlled and formal but that has an argumentative edge when they address other women or, more rarely, the men. It is time-consuming, but the goal is that after a conflict is aired out and the issues have been made public, analyzed and settled to both parties’ satisfaction, the air is clear again and the group members can go on to address other pending issues as a group.

The alternative to what they call “aclarar” (“clarifying”) would be for the feuding members to leave the group, which is a loss for the member and the group. This was the

case with one of the rural CAUP groups that years ago encountered problems of possible corruption in their midst. They started resolving them, but then some of the members decided to drop the whole issue and the whole group eventually broke up. During my fieldwork, there was a meeting of the representatives of all the rural groups, approximately eighty individuals, in the community of Chachapoya. Some representatives walked a whole day to be there. The visiting representatives and the representatives of the CAUP Team were given four meals that day, cooked by the Chachapoya women, and lodging that night in the hosts' homes and at the school. The visitors sat in the schoolyard, in chairs or on the ground, and first, lengthily and in turn, greeted those present, in the name of their community. Then each expressed the problems of their community and how they thought they should address them. A potential source of funding to finish the construction of their community buildings was discussed. The speakers on that occasion were almost exclusively the men. The members of the community that had fallen apart came to this meeting, lamenting that they had not been able to reach a resolution years before and expressing their intention to try again. The men of that group and also one woman, who was accused of generating part of the problem and who also explained herself at length, did most of the talking. Solutions were found by compromise so that the group could move forward. The success of this process depended on the capacity of the group to keep the momentum going, so that this time the discussions did not stagnate and solutions could be found.

Community control

Community control is useful to prevent problems of corruption or antisocial behavior in the community. For example, as Mercedes Zerda said in a focus group:

Sometime a father would hit his wife, but since they know that the mothers are closely knit and are strong, the father feels he is being socially controlled and starts to behave better, because the Daycare turns into a sort of countryside community. In the countryside, men usually don't misbehave because the community punishes them. Sometimes children are thieves and they steal, but here, we have social control, we have that sense of community that they don't have in other places.⁶

Another CAUP Team member mentioned that of all the CAUP members, the Awichas tend to mostly rely on the community for the resolution of their problems:

The awichas, instead of going to the police, who represent authority and can intervene in family problems, so that they can decide about those things, impose punishments and all that, [instead of that] they take their problems to the community. This is like a community in the countryside because it has acquired authority not only over the people that belong to it, but also upon the families that are connected to those families.⁷ (CAUP member)

When a CAUP family has a problem with the police, or legal problems because of a brawl at a party outside of the CAUP facilities, or over lack of child support payments, etc., the members of the different groups show their support in various ways, including giving emotional support and advice.

Within the organization, community control and intervention are not only effective in preventing problems, but also in resolving problems. On occasion, there have been thefts in the CAUP groups. In one case, years ago, a set of books disappeared. The

theft was mentioned in the group meeting and a few group members were commissioned to gather the opinions of yatiris (healers and diviners) they trusted to discover the culprit. Everyone was aware that this consultation was taking place. There was consensus among the yatiris: first they said that it had been someone from the daycare itself. Then they said it had not been one of the moms, but rather one of the tías. Then, the yatiris said that it was a tía that wore pollera, not a dress. Finally, in a meeting, the directiva (board) asked that everyone hand over one of their garments and took this big bundle of clothes to one yatiri so he could point out who it had been. The yatiri called upon the *ajayu* (soul) of the thief to confess. The next day, while the yatiri was telling a group of women that the thief would confess that day, the books appeared in the middle of the Daycare patio and one of the tías told the rest that her abusive partner had committed the theft. She was in great financial need and some of her children were in the Machaq Uta Daycare. The group members knew of her situation and understood the problem, which extended beyond the theft of the books. They tried to help her resolve the issue in a way that would allow her to address her dependency on this partner, save face and continue being a member of the group. A few group members gave her some of their washing jobs so she could be in a position to help herself, and so her children could continue going to Machaq Uta.

On another, more recent occasion to which I was witness, several chickens had been purchased to cook for a multi-generational festivity and by the time the cooking was done one chicken was unaccounted for. Word went around that the chicken had disappeared and the person who had taken it was encouraged to return the value of the chicken, even if they did not openly confess to the theft. If this did not happen, a yatiri

would be consulted to discover who it had been. The next day, the money appeared on the Machaq Uta kitchen counter. The level of social vigilance is high, making thefts less commonplace. When they do occur, the groups seek to resolve the situation without breaking up the community.

Transparency, accountability

In Machaq Uta, the Daycare, the weekly meetings of caretakers and parents, mostly women, reinforce that they are a community working together for the children. There is no higher authority than the parents themselves; they are the owners. The parents contribute not only money but also with direct oversight; parents and teachers are in close communication and caretakers are accountable to the parents. Machaq Uta families elect a board or *directiva* of four people each year from among the members. This *directiva* acts as a coordinating, presiding entity, but all of the parents are present in the weekly meetings, together with their children, the teachers and the cook. This is a quote from Elizabeth Oquendo, a Machaq Uta caretaker:

In other daycares [...] it all happens behind closed doors...I feel as if some daycares are like jails. Here parents can all come into the classrooms. [In other places] I can't see the classrooms that children use but here the parents can see where their children are, what they eat, you can know everything there is to know...⁸

Meetings take place on Monday nights. First, for about two hours, the *tíos* (“aunts” and “uncles”, terms of respect given to the Machaq Uta caretaker-teachers) have their own meeting, discussing issues pertaining to the programs and to individual children.

They talk about how the children are doing, which ones need closer attention academically or emotionally, and which are undergoing difficult family situations. Their own children are often present, playing or hanging out with their parents and with the other children. Then the caretaker-teachers go downstairs to the main meeting room and have their formal meeting with the parents with the *directiva* presiding. The caretakers describe the activities that the children have done that week, show samples of their work to the moms, and answer their questions. Then the cook reads aloud from her grocery list to inform the parents about what was bought, how much each item cost, and how much was spent that week, as well as what the children ate every day. Samples of the bread that has been baked for the children are handed around and tasted. There are always comments from the moms about where to get things cheaper or recommendations about individual children, their appetites, illnesses, pickup times, lost items, etc. In one meeting decisions were made as to how to deal with a neighborhood dog that was snapping at the children as they were being brought or picked up from Machaq Uta. A letter was written and sent and the owners of the dog invited to talk about the situation.

Generation and management of funds

Participation in income generating activities for the group

The Machaq Uta mothers (I am not aware that any fathers do this) contribute work for the community as part of their payment for the children. For example, they take turns baking bread for the children, four days a week. Mothers also take turns caring for the crops planted on the piece of property Machaq Uta owns in the nearby valley of

Chicani, where the pig farm had been, years ago. Performing tasks such as the baking of bread allows Machaq Uta mothers to contribute with work instead of money, and help the Daycare function. Mothers cook and bake for the Machaq Uta children, and just as with the caretakers, are paid for it. Cooking and baking for the Daycare does not bring in extra income that the Daycare sorely needs, but selling the crops grown on the property, does. Income generation is important for all three components of the CAUP because they receive a total of only about 20,000 U.S. dollars a year for the almost 500 people who are members.

To generate more income, about fifteen Machaq Uta mothers spin and knit and are paid for their work. When there is a buyer, these items are shipped to them and sold. The income is for Machaq Uta. The same is true for the Awicha spinners and knitters, who are paid for their work. The income obtained from the sale, however, is for the group.

Each Awicha group has an income-generating strategy. The Kupini Awicha group bakes bread and sells it cheaply to the group members, so that the members can resell it for the regular price on the street. That way the members get a small percentage individually and the group also gets income. The Alto Pampajasi Awicha group collects plastic bottles to recycle. Eighteen bottles weigh a kilo and they get one peso Boliviano and twenty cents for the kilo, in American dollars, about ten cents (The rate of the peso is rising with regards to the U.S. dollar. But at this time, the rate was eight Bolivian pesos to one U.S. dollar). The individual people who bring in the bottles are paid a sum per bottle and the rest is for the group. The Central Awicha group makes quinoa treats to sell at the market, with the same arrangement.

Besides these strategies, the groups come up with other ideas. They make and sell jello and sandwiches as well as buy sodas and resell them when there is an event, etc. Groups of Machaq Uta pre-teen and teen boys and girls and all the other groups cook and sell food at music festivals and at local events to make some money for their groups. Income generation is an ongoing preoccupation to keep the groups going and also to generate some money for individual members.

While each of the three components of the CAUP generate their own funds, Machaq Uta needs to generate more funds because they have to pay the caretakers. The money that is generated in Machaq Uta through the payment of fees covers the expenses for the food but not the salaries. The main response in individual interviews to the question: “What are the major problems or needs of the Machaq Uta at the moment?” was “We need more funds.” The reasons for this were varied, but include 1) the loss of long-time funding by a private donor, 2) the the mothers who brought their children to Machaq Uta were already paying as much as they could and therefore the tuition could not be raised and 3) that they needed a little capital to update their obsolete computers and their machine knitting workshop. What Machaq Uta will do to obtain those funds is an open question.

Joint savings and control of funds

The Awicha group members all contribute work and money to their groups to accumulate a small fund. Each member puts in a year as part of the *directiva* and a month being part of a *comisión* (a committee to buy dry goods or the meat from the market for

their meals). In addition, members participate in an income generating activity and are paid for their work. The remaining part of the money goes to the group savings, to spend as the group determines.

Awicha members also make a weekly contribution for the group. Dues are collected every week at the time of the roll call. The contributions are written down in a notebook or on a piece of paper scotch-taped to a large can which contains their savings.

The accounting is meticulous and overseen by the entire group. Each group has a bank account in which their money earns interest. The name on the account is changed each year when new group presidents are elected. The groups that do not have a meeting room of their own save up for the rent of a space. There is also a system in Bolivia through which if you pay a landlord a lump sum, you are allowed to live rent free for a year or two, after which your money is returned to you. The benefit for the landlord is receiving a lump sum as working capital, which she or he can return at the end of a year or two. Some of the Awicha groups have their own facility, some pay rent, some pay *anticrético* (the lump-sum method) and others, like the Senkata group, are still raising funds and saving up their money. There is also one group, the San Antonio group, that has decided that they prefer to spend their savings to have a good meal together on special occasions, and not save up to have a meeting room of their own, and that's their decision to make. Instead, they use the meeting room of the Bajo Pampajasi Awicha group one afternoon a week.

Contributing to a joint fund, keeping track of the money and deciding how it will be spent, gives the community a sense of control, ownership, and responsibility. Using their contributions, they can invest in a common enterprise. Larger undertakings include saving for an anticrético and smaller ones have included a meal for a holiday, a bag of cement to build a step at the entrance, a new pot, etc. On occasion the group has decided to skip a meal and save up that money for an expense they needed to make.

Values

Respect

Respect is socially enforced. Problems are brought to the group meetings, discussed in front of everyone, and solutions found where everyone can offer an opinion. A typical problem could be excessive arguing or malicious gossip, particularly among the Awichas who live in a shared facility. In the case of the other Awicha groups that only get together every week, or the Machaq Uta moms, the nature of the relationships and potential conflicts is different. Transgressions are costly in that when and if they occur, the person will be held accountable to the whole group. The CAUP members want peace among the members through clarity and reaching agreements as to what kind of satisfaction suits the grievance. When one person has created problems and shown lack of respect for others and their property, the group sometimes sanctions the person, who can be banished from the group for a few months. I met two members of the Awicha groups who had been banished for a few months and then were allowed to come back.

The CAUP community is based on common needs and on respect for one another. If members comply with the responsibilities entailed, they are entitled to a status of equality and respect. The community has accepted known alcoholics in their midst, and also people who are blind or deaf, who speak only Aymara, only Quechua, or only Spanish. In some cases, some Awicha members no longer live in Pampajasi, but continue to come, like Doña Alicia, who has moved away but still comes to the Friday meetings of group and rides the bus for an hour to get to Pampajasi. A more extreme case is that of Doña Matiasa, who only speaks Quechua, is more than ninety years old, and senile. She is exempt from most of her group responsibilities because of her old age, but she is also required to (try to!) respect the other members for the sake of her group and they are required to respect her. A few years ago she was banished from the group for a few months and these sanctions improved her behavior. I was told by CAUP members that everyone, including the children, deserves equal respect, and at least while I was there, I saw that the children were treated with consideration. Men and women treat each other caringly and use the formal terms “Don” and Doña” (Mr. and Mrs.) to address each other, or call each other tía or “tío” (“aunt” and “uncle”).

Many of the CAUP members mentioned the importance of respect and gestures of politeness not only to older adults, but also for peers and youngsters, even among themselves. In Machaq Uta, children are encouraged to greet and to acknowledge the presence of others, to say goodbye and to say thank you, as part of good community practices. For example, once they have finished eating, the children bring their plates and cups to the kitchen, rinse them out, stack them and say thank you to the cook and to the

other people in the kitchen. In the Awicha groups I saw the same custom, but the person who has finished eating also faces the other people eating and thanks them, either individually or making a general gesture a few times around a circle, also thanking them verbally for this shared meal.

Children learn about community through example and through their own practice. The children that are six and older get together every week to talk about themselves and how their own groups are doing. They discuss who creates problems within the groups, how they want to deal with them and about whether there will be a group sanction. This practice of community control and problem solving within the group replaces the need for external policing. The caretakers encourage this practice, make sure that the meetings take place with some regularity and see that the children bring up their issues and decide on courses of action. Lucía Vilca, a Machaq Uta caretaker, said:

.... from an early age we make the children notice that the tía and the tío are not the ones who manage things. In my group we start to organize them so that they decide themselves what they are going to do. No one imposes anything... This is like a community...⁹

Equality

Equality, like respect, is also socially enforced to ensure the peace. And the idea of equality with equal rights is empowering to the CAUP members. Also, when all rights and obligations are shared and equal, there is less of a risk of conflict and the group can invest its energies in joint projects. Equality was mentioned repeatedly by the members of the Awicha groups and of Machaq Uta as something that they particularly valued within

their community. Another word that comes to mind is “equivalence”. However, I have not noticed that men and women perform different or unequal tasks *as part of their membership responsibilities* in the urban groups, but I may be mistaken. In the rural groups the women seem to do all the cooking for the group meetings, while in the urban groups the men also cook. In the case of the very old or sick individuals, they can contribute in some small way which allows them to feel part of the community, which is a right as much as an obligation.

Addressing the issue of equality, one of the most visible and vocal of the founding members, Francisca Nina of Warminakax Saranti (precursor to the CAUP) had said in an interview in January, 1986: “We all work the same...and we earn the same...that’s why there is no fighting in this group”.

In Machaq Uta, the tíos or caretakers all earn the same as the cook and as the cooks of the Awicha groups. In Machaq Uta the job of cooking is rotated around every month, among the mothers with most financial need.

A young man who had been raised in Machaq Uta and is working in the city came to a CAUP meeting to visit. He told the CAUP Team that the principles of equal work and rights that he had learned as a child in Machaq Uta had served him well in his job with an electric power company in town. The employees were divided up into teams and his team consistently won prizes for productivity because he had suggested that they divide the work up equally and rotate the jobs around so no one was stuck for long with the harder duties. They shared responsibilities and benefits and enjoyed good peer relations and a good work environment.

Participation

Individual nontransferable participation is a cornerstone for community living and well-being. Children and adults participate and contribute their opinions to enrich discussions, to find how to best serve the common good and satisfy individual needs, to support and oversee the leaders so they do a good job, to make decisions, to reward good actions, to avoid abuse and corruption, and to ensure transparency and accountability. In the rural ayllu, and in rural unions that use rural-ayllu systems (such as that of the *cocaleros* [coca growers] in Cochabamba), families own land and land ownership entails participation. It is not a voluntary action but rather a consequence and a responsibility of land ownership. If you belong, you contribute. If you contribute, you also benefit. Participation is not only encouraged, it is enforced in order to construct a strong community. The CAUP ayllu-community is not based on land, but participation is the active principal behind the CAUP ayllu-community practices.

Solidarity

In a community orphans and the oldest people are taken care of. There is mutual collaboration. In that way, Qulla Uta (the Healing Center), Machaq Uta (the Daycare) and the Awichas are like a network, like a community. That is where the name comes from, from the community of Aymaras in the city.¹⁰ (M. Zerda)

Primitiva Laime of Qulla Uta said, “This is all about family”. “Community” for the CAUP members represents a safety net, akin to family. Silvia Maidana of Machaq Uta said in her interview, “I say that this is all about collaborating among ourselves, to

support each other, feeling we can have a refuge here and to help people who have nowhere else to go.”¹¹

However, community isn't just “there”: it is not just a group of individuals who live next door to each other or in the same area. Community is not automatic or unconditional; it is built through commitment, social responsibility, solidarity and reciprocity. The Awicha group coordinator, Marisol Surculento, says:

Solidarity keeps the Awicha community together [...] In Alto Pampajasi, when there is a sick person and nobody has gone there to visit, the awichas say, “why is there *rencor* (bad feelings), we have to go and see them, take them some food, we have to take turns, we have to have solidarity with people in need.” And if one of the awichas is a grouch and says [something like]: “Oh! I am not going to inherit anything from her, why should I go, why would I want to, she has daughters who can care for her, we aren't the only ones who can do this,” the other grandmas and grandpas criticize her...¹²

The Machaq Uta mothers and caretakers accept the children that are brought to the Daycare by the families. Some are orphans and others have learning disabilities. On one occasion they took in the children of a well-known family of thieves and troublemakers because the children were not to blame for what their adult family members did. Tía Silvia said,

We say “OK” to them because they are our children too, of even those of us moms that don't have older kids. We know that our kids will soon grow up and might be like those teens and that they will in turn need the same attention and care. We provide them with a good environment because if they go elsewhere, maybe they'll do bad things, have bad friends, whereas here, there are a lot of us to check and see if they are all right or up to no good.¹³

Solidarity among Aymara people, as Javier Mendoza explained to me, is personal and nontransferable. Solidarity invites reciprocity, which is mutuality, meaning being there for each other.

Reciprocity

Solidarity is part of reciprocity. When you give, you have formed a bond with the other person. So when they are in need, you reciprocate. When a person reaches out to a peer and helps them, then the person feels more comfortable asking for help when they need it. A relationship has been established. Reciprocity among the CAUP members also helps them be independent of outside funder pressures and therefore generates agency. Belonging to a community or not can be a matter of life and death in difficult situations; but perhaps more to the point, community and reciprocity are linked to an enhanced quality of life. In ayllu-communities “social power is acquired through redistribution, not accumulation, as in the Western style economy of exchange” (Zerda, 2005, p. 93). On a formal level, weddings, *quinceas* (formal parties for 15 year old girls), *rutuchas* (first ritual cutting of small children’s hair), being *pasantes* (in charge of the organizing and funding of a yearly community event), or other community responsibilities are occasions in which individuals and families redistribute wealth and “return” favors or past invitations. This often involves the help of extended family to cook and organize, often incurring large debts.

On a more day to day level, Primitiva Laime of Qulla Uta explained to me that in the same way that leadership that changes every year is rotational, reciprocity is also

rotational. Reciprocity is a sense of obligation that goes around and around between parties, as people give when people are in need and then receive when they are in need. The *ayni* is a form of solidarity that involves a promise of reciprocity on equal terms down the road. Primitiva said:

One rotational base is reciprocity and the other is the *ayni*. Even if it isn't clearly noticeable, I can see it exists. Sometimes I see that the Awichas have more funds from their donors and they have a surplus, so they send that money over to the children, because what the parents pay doesn't cover expenses. In the same way, when in Machaq Uta something is left over, like flour, or food, it is likewise sent to Qulla Uta, or for the Awichas...¹⁴

As Cancio Mamani says, “the beneficiary who has received the gift, never forgets the help received and is always alert...”¹⁵ or attentive to see when the person who gave first is in need. A moment of need is what conditions response, not the size or value of the original gift. Response can take various forms or even be returned to a person other than the original giver. One of many examples is when Marisol Surculento received a gift of money to take guitar lessons from a Swedish volunteer. She decided to pay it back in a way that made also sense to the volunteer, by playing and singing with the awichas before she was ever hired as Awicha facilitator.

Awicha group members live frugally. Half of the urban Awicha groups have living quarters and half only get together once a week, eat together, plan their work sessions and save up money to get their own meeting room and living quarters. When the Awichas have living quarters, each awicha has a small room to furnish and decorate as he or she likes. A group of between 15 to 20 awichas will eat a good meal on about 40 pesos,

about \$5 dollars. They could spend more, but that is how much they have decided to spend. They always have a bit of money left over to buy a little tea and sugar or sometimes might add a little from their pockets to buy chocolate and make a hot cup of chocolate on a cold night. There is always a little left over for a visitor. What they do not use themselves, they donate to the rural Awicha groups. In the last months of 2007 they had been sharing some of their supplies, specifically milk, with the Machaq Uta children, until Machaq Uta regained stability after losing an important source of funding they had had for many years.

Work

Knitting, spinning, baking, collecting, cooking to generate funds seems like a lot of work, but these activities take on another connotation if done within the community. Also, in the Aymara language, hard labor, for example with a pickax and a shovel, is actually “work”. Driving a taxi, for example, or working in an office, is not considered work because you sit while you drive or type. Work has many positive connotations for the Aymara. In a comparative study of eight to twelve year old children of different social, cultural, and economic backgrounds in La Paz, almost 60% of urban Aymara children considered that being a hard worker was their highest aspiration, compared to 24% of their non-Aymara counterparts (Montenegro, 1998, p. 96).

Javier Medina quotes Mario Torrez, who explains that for Andean families, work is a positive value as it is the basis for a healthy community. Good management has to do with making sure that there is balance, there is enough to eat, that systems are not

depleted, that there is sharing, that all can be provided for. Working is part of sharing and part of what generates 'a good way to live life'. Work done as a group and in harmony is also festive and an occasion to share, talk and enjoy time together (Torrez, in Medina 2006, p. 42, 43). As I was reminded by Samuel Oquendo in a CAUP meeting, the three precepts of the Aymara and the Quechua peoples are: don't steal, don't be lazy, don't lie. So staying busy is a virtue. If work were considered only drudgery or if there were no individual benefits, sustainability would be difficult for the CAUP community to achieve. I have noticed that most of the men of the groups, particularly among the Awichas, take pride in participating in the work groups. The environment, particularly in the Kupini group that bakes bread to earn income for their group, was festive. The work was meticulously divided out: one person weighed the flour, another the sugar, some baked, some cooked for the others. In the Central Awicha group there was more tension the day they prepared their quinoa treats, perhaps because their tasks weren't as clearly divided out; there was some scolding among the women because the quinoa was insufficiently washed, or because there were still some stones in it. In both groups the women bustled around and occasionally consulted with the men, and the other women: had the quinoa been washed enough, respectfully asking Don Juanito to taste the water from each batch to be sure, should they prepare the quinoa on the floor or on a table? Men and women visited and worked side by side for about eight hours in each case, and then sat down to chat and share a meal when they were done. The Kupini group was more relaxed and there was more laughing and joking throughout.

Multigenerational activities

The multi-generational character of the CAUP reinforces its sense of community and strengthens the cultural link between tradition and innovation. Senior citizens, adults, teenagers, and children, some sharing blood ties and others not, have constant interaction. Multigenerational get-togethers take place for private and public occasions, in which awichas, adults, and children, celebrate birthdays together, particularly when they're celebrated at the Machaq Uta facilities, or to support the grieving family when someone dies.

Children from Machaq Uta visit the Awicha groups. They take them something good to eat and in return the awichas tell them stories and play with them. The Machaq Uta children have gone on several two and three day trips with groups of Awichas, the most recent of which was in December of 2006. The children visited other groups of awichas in the countryside and slept over in their houses and in school classrooms. They shared their meals, learned how to plow and sow seeds, played games and heard stories.

At other times the Machaq Uta children go on day trips. All the children attend, from the babies to the eighteen year olds, and the moms and the older kids watch over the babies. There are music festivals throughout the year, in which children of all ages and senior citizens participate together, often inviting other groups from outside the CAUP and sharing with them.

Among the fixed events, which have music, food, and multigenerational participation, are the day of Tupak Katari (an important Aymara leader from the 18th century) on Nov. 14th, Father's day, Mother's Day, Machaq Mara (The Aymara New

Year, celebrated June 21st), and the Dia del Anciano (Day of the Senior Citizen), on August 26th. Besides consolidating the community, all of these events help the CAUP make itself known within Pampajasi and in the city and encourage agency as they are increasingly invited to participate in festivals in other places.

Music

Javier Chipana, the “music tío” and CAUP Team member says: “Music heals [...] many children are confused, because they can’t accept themselves [...]. Perhaps what I have to do, my task, is to guide them, give them a way to return to their identities.”¹⁶

Live music is also part of all of the events and celebrations of the CAUP. Music fuels the sense of community and interaction. Not only is it a fun skill to develop it is also linked to culture, to a cultural esthetic, and to memory. Playing music and dancing to it keeps the CAUP together, it’s cultural spirit alive, and enhances community within the everyday. Music invokes memory, emotion, and sharing. Javier has been learning from the grandpas and grandmas for many years, rediscovering old dances, rhythms, and songs that were played by the previous generations of Awichas. He teaches what he has learned to the young. Much more than writing or painting, the making of music and dancing pulls people together and is a powerful reinforcer of culture in their lives. The Awicha musicians cry sometimes when they play, says Javier, but it also makes them feel good to remember times past. The youngsters at Machaq Uta learn to play nine wind instruments, the music that can be played on each, and the seasons in which each instrument is played.

They learn as a group and continue learning as they play with the Awicha musicians and with other young musicians. Javier Chipana says:

That's what brings everyone together, music. Music is always present in every cultural activity or festivity, in every community milestone: funerals, birthdays, baptisms, a *preste* (music, dancing, a festivity with a sponsor, on an important community occasion)...everywhere you will see that autochthonous music is present, native music is present...Aymara music involves the entire community. That's why everyone dances in a big circle, not between two people, it's the entire community. One of music's functions is to be a *socializador* (to help people become full members of society) and it is also a means of spiritual communication. Aymaras also use music for their rituals, when they have to sow, or when they do the *challas* (blessings)...¹⁷

Ritual activities, the use of coca

Music is a “socializer” and coca is even more so. The older members of the CAUP always have their *coquita* with them, in a green plastic bag, within a knitted bag. Sometimes they have their own coca and they chew individually. To socialize, they offer others some of their coca. Other times, a large amount of coca is bought and placed in the center so all will share. The individual leaves are broken off at the stem, put in the mouth, and usually gathered in one cheek, as the juice seeps out slowly.

Bags of coca are bought in the markets and are always taken along when visiting another group, particularly when visiting the CAUP groups in the countryside. The coca is taken out of its bag and spread out on an *awayo*, or colorful square woven textile, on a table, and all the participants take a few leaves, give thanks and sit back down. This is part of the ritual of any meeting, particularly any important one: the sharing of coca and the informal talk before any issues are discussed. This is also the etiquette when receiving

visitors in a rural home. When Don Mario, one of the yatiris of Qulla Uta, got together with about forty other healers in 2006-07 to consult on issues related to the new laws on health, they first chewed coca together.

Coca is used to heal and to perform divinations. It is also used as a mild anesthetic, to heal bruises, to ease the pain of broken bones, and to cure headaches and stomachaches. Coca is a mild stimulant, similar to coffee, and thus useful in combating exhaustion, hunger, and high altitude sickness. It is used by students to help them stay awake while they study and by people doing hard physical work like miners, construction workers, and farmers. In the city, indigenous and non-indigenous people often drink coca tea after eating, to aid digestion. Coca is an important part of offerings and rituals. In high places like mountain passes, people stop and leave chewed coca at the high altitude markers or *apachetas*. Coca is part of the ritual offerings burnt for good fortune, peace, health, and for rites of passage.

Coca and rituals are used within the CAUP in the same way that they are used traditionally in the countryside. For example, Tuesdays and Fridays are “unlucky” and CAUP members get together and chew coca. In the first years, Don Mario used to practice rituals for the first Awicha group each Friday, burning a small offering, praying and sharing coca. Now just the groups that live on the premises get together to chew coca. Several times a year, most homes in the Andean region make offerings to keep family members healthy, in good spirits, and on track. On these occasions, and particularly in the month of August, Don Mario burns a large ritual offering in the presence of all the CAUP members, and each man and woman and youth present throws a little alcohol and wine on

the flames, expresses his or her wishes for health, harmony, and well-being for the group. They then sit together, sharing coca leaves.

Memory – don't you dare forget

Memory and story telling are an important part of keeping the CAUP community together, acting as a continual reminder that the building up of this CAUP community has been the result of a long, joint effort. The community needs the members to know how the community of the CAUP came about and what they are a part of.

The “founding” members, who belonged to the Warminakax Saranti group (and of whom only two or three are still around), contribute to the community with their anecdotes and occasionally, with rebukes. A rebuke or scolding is a sign of caring, a sign that parents, that caretakers, are not indifferent (Doña Juana, from one of the Awicha groups). The following was taken from my notes in 2006, where Doña Francisca, one of the founding members, talked to the awichas about memory when they were gathered in the patio of their house. Doña Francisca was alive during my first visit, but she had already died when I returned a few months later. I had just arrived to Pampajasi that day. I sat down with a group of awichas who were just starting to tell me the story of how their group got together. At that moment, Doña Francisca slowly emerged from her room where she had lived for many years in “the Green Awicha House”. She sat down, looked at everyone and then scolded them:

You have everything you need, now. This is the fruit of my work, of my thoughts, of my mouth. You have everything thanks to me, to Dionisia, to Manuela... There

were just eight of us. We needed a piece of land. And Peti [Mercedes Zerda] helped us get this piece of land, which was full of trash and which we had to clean out. Peti wrote and wrote, every week. And we walked, we talked, everywhere we walked. We begged. The *gringos* finally arrived and gave us some money to start building this house. Now you have everything. You have a kitchen, a storeroom, a dish, a cup, you have everything. We had nothing back then. We had to borrow from others sometimes. We would each bring a few little potatoes from our houses, a little rice. And we contributed twenty cents each time. And we ate just a little, just a little. But we made it and we took care of everybody. “You mean old lady, why do you guard those doors so zealously, those bags of cement, the electricity, the water...? They’re not yours” – people would say. But we continued caring for everything, so it would be there for you, so you could all have it. I was young and now my body is old. I am blind and deaf, my body is devastated. But I can tell that you don’t work for what you have, like we did, you rarely knit or spin, you are lazy, you don’t come to the meetings. You are ungrateful.¹⁸

The other awichas looked sheepish, nodded their heads. Many of them told me later that they thought it was important that all of them, mostly the new members, be told these stories, so they wouldn’t take things for granted.

Benefits

Empowerment through emotional support

How are the CAUP members empowered? The interviews revealed that before becoming part of the CAUP, most people felt something akin to subalternity, sadness, anomie, a feeling that they did not belong and were not able to cope. After becoming members, CAUP members say in many different ways that belonging to Machaq Uta has helped them in practical ways and as emotional support. This is what two awichas said about their own experience:

My daughter, she threw me out. My other daughter, I can stay at her house, but only if I sit by the door, like a *chullpa*, (a mummy that is in a fetal position), so I don't take up any space. That's why I came here. Here I can talk and laugh with the others.¹⁹

I come here because here we laugh, we eat, we get mad at each other...in the house, it's all silence. Here, people talk to me, people criticize me, people bless me. I spend my time happily here.²⁰

As many of the quotes in previous chapters, particularly Chapter IV, have illustrated, until CAUP members felt safe, they were not able to function to capacity: They felt lost, "orphaned", powerless. One of the first human needs after food and shelter is to feel safe.

Belonging

Not having children is as daunting for Aymara peoples as not having parents. This sense of being disconnected, of not having family, no one to take care of you in your old age, is the real meaning of the word "poor" in Aymara. Not having financial means is more incidental, but not having family means the links of belonging and reciprocity are missing, as are the possibilities of an interconnected and therefore meaningful life, and also survival in old age.

Many migrant families feel a sense of isolation and the lack of a community when they move to the city. The CAUP community provides some relief. It is not exactly like an ayllu, it is a reconstituted ayllu-style community in the city, with no territorial base. But it does provide its members with a sense of belonging and community, where the cycles of reciprocity can sustain them emotionally and practically.

The sense of belonging, of safety, where the values and the practices of the community are part of a habitus and comfortable like an old shoe, allows individuals and families who are members of the CAUP to avoid feelings of helplessness. Pierre Bourdieu has written extensive ethnographic descriptions of African migrants to Paris, in which these immigrant families struggle to find work and shelter, but as years go by often remain in a limbo, neither attached to their families and cultures back home nor integrated into their new surroundings. This, to some degree, is also the situation of Turkish migrants in Germany, and of migrants everywhere. A sense of community and belonging in a new community in the city helps dissipate the silence and the isolation: the sense of being powerless and beaten down by the new environment. The CAUP members derive strength from each other, from helping and receiving help from each other, from what they can do together and from their mutual company. The permanent process of community building gives each member a sense of purpose, a much needed sense of belonging, and also the means to resolve everyday practical needs. New communities in the city strengthen group and individual identities, and these safe enclaves can act as a buffer from which individual members can increasingly interact with larger society if and when they need and choose to.

Dignity

Participating and investing in the community gives CAUP members a sense of equality and respect, and therefore, dignity. But more importantly, members enter into relations of reciprocity with the community and with individuals inside and outside of it. According to Dominique Temple, reciprocity is the basis for dignity because you receive

with the knowledge that some day you will be called upon to return the favor, which makes receiving more acceptable. Reciprocity is an equalizing mechanism in that everyone will someday have a need and will receive help. Donors will someday be receivers and vice versa. This is also an important factor in the kind of relationship that the CAUP has established with their donors and which has allowed them to feel empowered and strong even as they are the recipients of help. Reciprocity and dignity facilitate agency, which is the sense that you can receive today because you are committing to reciprocate. The way you will reciprocate may not involve money at all, but perhaps will involve providing “shelter from the storm”, teaching something, providing a service, or even praying for the other person or persons. Sometimes beggars on the streets of La Paz, mostly the old men and women, offer to pray for you in exchange for your coin.

Ownership and pride

Ownership and pride also help sustain agency. Contrary to what happens in many institutions in which children and adults are asked to feel ownership of objects and projects over which they don't have decision making power, in Machaq Uta, as Silvia Maidana and Angel Apaza of Machaq Uta said previously, members are aware that everything that is there belongs to them to use as they please.

The fact that Machaq Uta is run the way members want it to run, even if it is not currently operating at full potential, is a source of pride. One of the aspects of their work that the group seemed to take most pride in was their ownership and autonomy. Many of

their interviews include the story of how Machaq Uta preferred to eschew funding because it entailed restrictions on their system of participatory consensus making. Here, Elizabeth of Machaq Uta talks about the Daycare:

Machaq Uta is independent...there is no male or female director that gives orders, it is the community itself that gives the orders, listening to the base and that is absolutely different [from other places], right? Because in other places there is always an NGO, or in a soup kitchen, a daycare, [there is always] a director or a big NGO that you are dependent on [...] but Machaq Uta is independent.²¹

Well-being

Well-being is the result of needs being met but also goes beyond that to include the absence of conflict, illness, hunger, or lack. Definitions of “well-being” include references to wellness, happiness, health, safety, and prosperity. Also implied in these definitions are states of balance, of feeling well adjusted, of feeling respected, and of feeling part of a group that is respected.

For CAUP members, fluid communication, sharing, conversation and laughing all reflect social well-being. Tension and silence signal problems and the need to air out the conflicts in a general assembly. CAUP members frequently stressed how important it was to them to resolve conflicts and get past them and how upset they felt until the day of the meeting when the issue could be brought up, discussed, and resolved. What people define as “well-being” is dependent on social and cultural priorities.

In Aymara the sense of “poverty”, of feeling deprived, lost, and alone is contained in the term “orphan”. There is no specific word in Aymara to say “poor” or “poverty”. A person who has no family or no community is considered “poor”. A sense of community

makes things fall into place and helps give members a sense of well-being (Zerda, 2005, p. 93 and Widmark, 2003, p. 197).

Mercedes Zerda explains how the process of community building and ownership have helped consolidate the group, conferring a sense of belonging and well-being:

I believe that the CAUP and each one of the groups achieve a function that satisfies a need people have. In other words, the mothers of the Daycare are there because they need the Daycare, but they also feel comfortable there because it belongs to them. They decide. The awichas are in their groups because they are convenient to them, but they also have a need for inclusion, a psychological need. I think that when they come from the countryside and they feel deprived of community, they feel like orphans, a psychological problem. But when they are part of this artificial community, that part is resolved. People begin to comply, not because of any salaries that they will receive or because of the food, but because the daycare [or the senior center] have substituted their rural community.²²

In one section of his paper “The Harmony of Inequalities” George Gray Molina presents the results of a World Bank study regarding the self-perception of poverty and how it is dependent on social and cultural factors. The study showed that Aymara people were less apt than other indigenous peoples or than non-indigenous peoples to consider themselves poor even though they had equally low incomes. Gray Molina concedes that this difference may be attributed to the well-being Aymara people derive from non-monetary sources, specifically from belonging to a community or an organization (2005, p. 24).

This sense of well-being, generated by living as part of a community, has been called in Aymara and in Quechua, *suma qamaña*, “a good life”. Grimaldo Rengifo and Eduardo Grillo define it as a world where everyone knows, talks to, and accompanies

each other and everyone establishes a common wavelength with each other and their surroundings (Medina, 2005, p. 53-57). Diego Tórrez defines it as living together and sharing, deriving well-being from the interconnectivity between people and their environment, and enhancing connections through ritual (Tórrez in Medina, pp. 34-35).

Acknowledgement

A community whose work is acknowledged with respect by others is constantly receiving feedback about its work which makes members more aware of the value of their experience and proud of their group.

The CAUP Team is aware that their contact with other organizations is increasing and that their experience is valued because it is explicitly based on the rural ayllu-community and has proved to be sustainable. Their connection with government institutions has become stronger since the election of the first Aymara president, in December of 2005, and their possibility of influencing work taking place at the national level clearly enhances the agency of their community.

We have started to have contact with other institutions and NGOs and none of them do work similar to ours. That is leading us to have more contact and to teach other groups of NGOs and institutions in [the city of] El Alto, our model. We have decided to enter into an exchange and see if they can apply our models and they have suggested that we go over there and give seminars on the model our institution uses. If the changes that this government has started continue, this model may end up in a prominent place.²³ (Roxana Pérez of the CAUP Team)

Two years ago the CAUP was invited to teach eight modules about Native Cultures. Eight people from CAUP taught these courses on an experimental basis to the

middle school students of a prestigious school in neighboring Villa Copacabana. The following year, after receiving very positive reviews from students, parents, teachers and the principal, they were invited to teach again.

Through the years, several CAUP members have also been invited to speak publicly in Swedish cities. The opportunities to talk about the CAUP “community model” enhanced the sense of agency of the individual speakers and of the group as a whole. I witnessed many invitations to speak and participate in workshops being read aloud to the groups. The group then suggests that one or two of the members, often those people who haven’t spoken at such workshops recently, go and speak on behalf of the group to talk about their experiences.

Agency and empowerment

A Team member and university student said, “The difference between university politicians and what it [the CAUP] does is that at the university, they just talk. At the CAUP, they don’t talk, they do.”²⁴

The CAUP began its work “doing.” They did not have a distant goal on the horizon but instead based their work on their habitus of ayllu-community organizing, which was propelled by the needs which they wanted to address as a self managing community. But as each of the groups became stronger and developed a group identity, they started “coming into their own.” They became increasingly able to use their community to start new projects, to make decisions, to resolve their problems within the group, to manage their own money, and to grow and become more empowered. Despite

being immersed in a society that oppressed them, they felt the stirrings of their own agency and capacity to act, to change what they did not like, and to work towards solutions for their common problems. As Stuart Hall wrote, despite being a “fragmented, de-centred human agent”, the CAUP members became increasingly aware of their power to act against the society that oppressed them and to choose, both as a group and as individuals, how they were going to use this power.

One first level of agency and empowerment was to begin organizing based on their habitus of the ayllu-community. The next level was the awareness of the value of their collective actions. As Lucía, of Machaq Uta, said in an interview:

The Machaq Uta is an organization that was created upon the basis of Aymara culture. This is like a community [...] We are aware that we would not be able to access the same level of help anywhere else, nor the same level of organization, or the unity [...] just knowing we are only dependent on ourselves and that we can move this forward without letting it go. Each mother is like an owner and we will not allow this to founder.²⁵

This is the same spirit expressed more than twenty years earlier by Doña Nemesia, Doña Vicky and Doña Fermina in their 1985 interview with the reporter from the indianist publication *Chitakolla*. They had said (paraphrased: the original quote is in Chapter IV): We know how to organize, we know each other, we are united, we know what we're doing - *Tenemos un solo pensamiento* (we think the same way), we have united all of our thoughts and we all work for the group, we handle our own money, we know what we have, and it is all our doing. They were aware then, as the mothers are now, that this is a product of their doing as a community.

Awareness of how their organization works, of their past history and experience and of their history of being able to put their heads together and resolve problems as they come, is a source of empowerment. Members consolidate this awareness by talking about their work, by self-representation when new groups are forming, and when they talk to visitors, to journalists, to potential donors. When new groups such as the Senkata group are forming, members from the older Awicha groups travel to see them. The Awicha members come to hear about their experiences and to share their own experiences, difficulties, successes and practical advice. They talk to the members of the new group about all of the elements that they know were instrumental to bring their group together: the importance of yearly rotating leadership to avoid corruption and to enhance ownership, the importance of getting together regularly, of eating together, of playing music together. They tell of how building the group was hard work but it was worth it because one day, as one of the speakers said, “Your community will blossom like flowers, like ours did.”

Also, within the Awicha groups, when a new member joins the group, they are instructed by the entire group as to the rights and obligations of being a new member. This includes participation, working on specific commissions, contributing money each week, and being a member of the directiva.

Don Mario Yujra mentioned in the CAUP Team focus group, “You have to have your own decision making power, your own conscience” because otherwise, there are no results” (*sin propia decision, sin propia conciencia, no hay frutos*).

The CAUP members don't use the words agency or empowerment, but they express that the community works for them and that they intend to continue moving this community forward. They are aware of the practices and values that are the dynamic forces behind their community and are aware of the benefits they derive from it: emotional support, belonging, dignity, ownership, well-being, acknowledgement, sustainability, and the agency and empowerment that all of these benefits imply. Therefore, the sense of community seems to be, at the same time, a means *and* an end. Community sustains bodies and spirits. As they achieve their group practical goals, they feel empowered to take the next step: empowerment to continue living, to continue organizing, to share what they have with others, and to spawn new groups and new activities.

Some of the CAUP members find that not only is the CAUP a refuge, but that it has potential for outreach and creative work. Although it doesn't yet have funding for them, Machaq Uta has been thinking about income generating projects such as computer classes for neighborhood children and adults, workshops and art projects and student exchange projects. When I asked Don Mario Yujra of Qulla Uta how people outside of the CAUP could contribute to the CAUP's efforts to expand its work, he said:

We need a radio station; we need a TV channel to talk about our things, about our culture. We could have Aymara soap operas, we could talk about medicine and we could have music. We have all kinds of knowledge, but we don't have funds. That's where we could collaborate; as long as we are allowed to speak and to decide.²⁶

Sustainability

The process of community building generates empowerment. A community that has developed mechanisms to problem solve and deal with conflict, as well as provide well-being and agency to its members, has a better chance to be sustainable through time and thus more able to survive crisis than one without such structure.

Empowerment grows together with the daily construction and maintenance of community, with the daily resolving of problems, decision making, reaching out to new people in need, expanding the groups, adapting to the times, and increasingly, sharing their experience with others. Ownership generates empowerment and the CAUP members feel that they can use the community, work with it, and through it.

Agency, empowerment, and money counterbalance each other in different ways. For the CAUP, autonomy is obtained at a financial cost when they refuse funding that comes with restrictions. However, to function with little or no subsidizing is empowering in itself. The CAUP members contribute to help support the organization: Machaq Uta mothers either pay full tuition, or pay less and contribute community work to keep their children in the daycare and eating three meals a day. The Awichas pay in a very small amount each week which saves up money to spend as they wish, as a group; and they contribute with work. The Qulla Uta healers provide services and are paid when their clients can afford to pay a few cents or bring some groceries. Usually, the healer does not charge a fixed amount but, instead, asks the clients to pay as much as they consider the service was worth to them. Some clients cannot afford to pay, but when wealthier clients

come up from the city for readings or treatment they often pay a little more, so it balances out in the end.

Private and public lives are intertwined. This is exemplified by the work contributed by CAUP Team members who have a deep sense of commitment to the CAUP. Aside from their self-imposed activities and the time devoted to meetings, most have day jobs and families to support. It helps that the lines that divide their work for the CAUP and their home life are blurred: many of the CAUP Team's children benefit from their parents' affiliation to CAUP because they tag along with their parents to the field trips, the soccer and volleyball games at Machaq Uta. They often eat, receive care, or do their homework there. CAUP Team members know that if they have a need for cash, child care, if they need company or moral support, a place to sleep while other housing arrangements can be made, or a shoulder to lean on, they can find it among the other CAUP members. Volunteers seem content to contribute ten or even twenty hours a week to the organization in exchange for the emotional support, the friendship and the experience gained. The CAUP Team members and the CAUP community as a whole benefit from being a community in many ways that are not directly economic.

Due to the mostly voluntary nature of the CAUP Team work, there are little or no outside pressures because there is no driving force outside of the CAUP to keep it moving in a predetermined direction. There is no outside commitment that has to be honored at the cost of what is good for the CAUP community. This also means that the CAUP community can choose to undertake tasks and activities that are not directly related to generating income but related to the strengthening of community, such as

investing time and money in the children's musical endeavors and with the senior citizens of the Awicha groups. They can teach classes, and organize festivals and cultural events. This choice to put community priorities first contributes to feelings of agency and empowerment.

The CAUP Team is an important part of what keeps the CAUP community going. On Wednesday nights the Team gets together, not only for reporting and planning, but also to touch base and socialize. The Team members do as the other groups do: they start arriving at 7:30 or 8:00 p.m. and chat informally until the meeting begins by unspoken consensus. Outside observers from abroad had commented that personal issues were shared in the meetings, and that this was perhaps inappropriate, and also made the meetings run long, three, four, five hours. It is true, the Team members said, the meetings were long, but they were also interesting, informative, and fun. A little tea was shared, some bread, or a little candy someone brought. Sometimes a wife or a husband of one of the Team members would join the group. Some children were being held on laps and passed around. Team members had a sense of how the others were, how their families were, how work was going, and therefore how the following weeks and months would play out. Personal and work related events were basically part of the same thing. There are often some extra people there: Moms or teens from Machaq Uta, some of the Team member's children, family members, etc.

The CAUP Team travels every two weeks, often overnight, to visit the groups in the countryside. CAUP Team members are all from Pampajasi and all are friends and family of members. Many have been part of CAUP since they were children or teenagers.

However, one potential source of problems is that the wives and husbands who are not as directly involved in the Team activities sometimes complain that these activities take up too much of the spouse's time. It is a constant struggle to keep all their various responsibilities appropriately balanced. CAUP Team members put in as much time as they can but sometimes (such as when they were teaching courses of Native Cultures at a school and had to go to class, grade papers, go to school meetings and plan for class presentations), it becomes clear that they are stretched very thin. They had been sharing some available funds, but to keep up at that pace while working at their day jobs and tending to their families put a strain on them.

Javier Mendoza jokes, "We rarely fight here because we have no extra money or resources to fight over." And while it may be true that there are rarely any serious arguments among the CAUP Team members, smaller issues are constantly coming up. Airing conflicts out in front of a group of people probably helps keep aggression down and the communication flowing.

Ongoing funding for projects helps predictability and contributes to being able to think beyond mere survival, but it is difficult to obtain. CAUP sources of funding come and go due to the changing criteria of funders. No-strings-attached funds are hard to come by.

One of the stories that I was told in various versions by different CAUP members was that a few years ago a potential funder, excited about the potential of this small, urban community, offered fifty thousand dollars for several projects if they accepted outside professionals overseeing the work. All of the groups debated this separately and

then their leaders got together to share with the rest what the grassroots had decided. The groups decided not to take the money unless it was possible to receive less – they “didn’t need” as much on a one time basis. Also, they wanted to be allowed to handle the money themselves. The funder withdrew the offer because fifty thousand was the lowest amount his organization could offer and it could not be donated without introducing managers. Upon being given the news, one long-time Awicha member, Cristina Chino, who is now the cook for one of the Awicha groups, commented cheerfully, “That’s fine with us - we are poor, but we are free.”

Stories

Most of the stories of individual awicha members reflect increasing well-being and empowerment after joining their groups. In some cases, the CAUP groups provide a service and a safe haven. For others, it is more clearly a source of agency and empowerment. While a few of the individual stories people told me in the months I was there reflected that some of the people in their groups occasionally drove them crazy (“Sometimes I feel like taking a bus and leaving – I just can’t stand this Matiasa, who really gets on my nerves”), everyone said without reservations that they were better off in their groups than without them. Some people had left their groups at some point for different reasons, sometimes for months because they moved, but later returned to them because they missed the sense of belonging.

These are some of the stories of individual people from the Awicha groups (the first three), from the CAUP Team (two), from the Machaq Uta moms (three) and Qulla

Uta (two). They are for the most part not very detailed, and I chose them randomly from my notes. I have decided to include these stories because although this thesis is about the CAUP organization as a whole, it is important not to lose sight of the individual people that comprise it, their circumstances, and what the CAUP has meant to their lives.

Doña Marcelina Guevara is a member of an Awicha group. She is from the mines of Pulacayo, Potosí. She had had a hard life, ending up with many fatherless children and living on the streets. Her children were being raised elsewhere and she was barely cognizant after all her hardships, when she was invited by the group founders to become a member of the first group. They recruited her as a caretaker for a small property they had just acquired, which had been an auto repair place, so she could both benefit from living in a small room on this property, and provide a human presence on the premises. Doña Marcelina tells me that this property was bought from Doña Juana Huanca around 1982. The property had two little rooms at the back, a big one and a kitchen. The roof leaked. The three little rooms in the front were finished and the patio was cemented many years later, in 1998. A Canadian organization, whose name is on a plaque on the wall, donated the construction materials. She says that the names of the founders of the first group were Fermina, Juana, Cisca and Julia. Other names come up, of people who have since died: Encarna, Teresa, Cristina, Rita, Cristina Mayta. These rooms first housed the original Daycare, and years later, the Central Awicha group. The Awicha group has had running water for three years now. Before, the members had to carry water up from the Green Awicha house, at least 10 blocks away. Or, Doña Marcelina got water from her godmother who lived next door, by the bucket, or with a hose, watching out not to be

caught, she said. When it rained, they caught rain water in a barrel. Slowly, with community support, she regained her mental and physical health and became a full member of the group. She was president three times and still lives in this house, together with six other awichas. Her pretty room has an extra bed where she can host her sons when they come over to see her.

Doña Ramona Cahuana is from the valley of Sorata, department of La Paz. As far as she knows, she was her mother's only child. When she was ten she was given away by her mother to a wealthy woman to help around the house and the store. She says she cried her eyes out at first, but later became accustomed to her *Señora's* ("Mrs", in other words, her employer) ways, partly because while there no lack of work in the house, there was no lack of food, either. As a young woman and when she heard that her Señora intended to marry her off, she ran away to Yungas. There, she married and had eight children, two of whom survived, only to die as young adults. Her husband was an electrician and died by electrocution. She was homeless. To support herself she became a rag picker, who selected bits of metal, plastic bottles, and bone to sell. She also sold a little fruit on a street corner in Pampajasi. She was recruited into the first Awicha group more than twenty years ago by the formidable Doña Francisca, one of the founders. Now she is in charge of the Qulla Uta store, sells herbs, accounts for the money received, opens Qulla Uta in the mornings, and shuts down for the night. She is a respected member of the Pampajasi Bajo "Green House" Awicha group.

Don Trifón Cárdenas and his wife are from Apolo, Department of La Paz, and they came to the city as adults. They were very close, group members recall. They both

joined the Alto Pampajasi Awicha group as it was barely taking off, holding meetings on the neighborhood library steps each week. He was shy, group members told me, also a real grouch and he had trouble sharing with others. He eventually learned how to dance and became very adept at it. He then taught the awichas dances from his native town of Apolo and led many dance troupes with his Awicha group. They won a trophy at a competition at the University of San Andrés which is still in their meeting room. “I really woke up as a person in these meetings,” he said, smiling. He was elected to be president four times and each time achieved great benefits for his group. He moved away to El Alto with his wife, but is a frequent visitor.

Javier Chipana is the music professor, in charge of all the music programs of the CAUP. His mother, Lucía Jiménez, was one of the original organizers. She came to La Paz as a young adult. Javier has a brother and a sister and when their mother died, the children were raised by the other mothers of the first women’s group, Warminakax Saranti, on that first piece of property the group acquired and slowly built up. Javier is now a central part of the CAUP Team, is married and has two children, both of whom attend Machaq Uta. He plays all of the Andean instruments and knows most of the dances of the Andean region and has done extensive research on them. He is also a talented graphic designer. The research he performs is as much on the music as on rural practices and how music relates to the different seasonal rituals. He is also in charge of all the music programs, which involve the Machaq Uta children and the Awicha groups, in separate smaller groups and larger integrated groups. A central part of his work involves salvaging traditional music and dances and teaching them to the youngsters. He has

traveled abroad representing the CAUP and is one of the people that has accompanied the CAUP process of community building for the longest time. Some years ago, he joined a Christian church and became involved in their religious work. He later made a choice to return to the CAUP to pursue working with the senior citizens and the children and is at the hub of all of the multi-generational activities, the festivals and events.

Samuel Ortuño is also the son of one of the founding members of the CAUP, Doña Francisca Chambilla de Ortuño, who is still a CAUP member in charge of the knitting groups. Doña Francisca has continued working with the CAUP since then. She is now a liaison person with one of the rural groups the CAUP has begun to work in, Kusijata, which is her community of birth. She arrived in La Paz speaking only Aymara, with two children and pregnant with a third, escaping her abusive mother in law and searching for her husband, who had gone to the city to find work. After a long search, she found him. Samuel is her eldest son, also born in Kusijata. He has been part of Machaq Uta since childhood. Samuel has four younger sisters, one of whom studied to be an educator and was previously a caretaker at Machaq Uta. Samuel is an artisan, has a day job, and has also studied computer sciences. He has been working with young people, in the CAUP and outside of the CAUP, with youth groups, and with homeless children. He is currently a CAUP team member, travels to visit the rural Awicha groups, helps with the computer work, and also works with the children of Machaq Uta as a volunteer.

Doña Elsa Ticona was a board member several times in Machaq Uta. When we spoke, she was cooking for the children that month. She had had twelve children of whom seven survived and she and her husband had trouble making ends meet. Her

husband was a carpenter and she worked several jobs, including working with her daughters on road construction crews around the city, washing clothes, and being a cook in a food court at a market in La Paz. Some years ago, the propane gas tank they used to cook at the market caught fire and she was badly burned and had to stay home for a year until the burns healed. She still washes clothes when she can get the work. Several of her children and grandchildren go to Machaq Uta and she often cooks for the children. One of her daughters, Lucía, is a caretaker at Machaq Uta. Lucía is a head of household, has two children, and also generates extra income washing clothes and doing odd jobs.

Doña Erodita's son attends Machaq Uta. She has several on-demand jobs during the week besides occasionally cooking for the Machaq Uta kids: she cooks for a restaurant, works as a helper on a minibus doing runs between Pampajasi and the city, and washes clothes. She lives with her 12 year old son, who has learning disabilities and is constantly being expelled from one school and having to be moved to another. He hangs out and plays music with the other kids at Machaq Uta. His mother says, "This is the only place where they really understand him."

Doña Vicky Orosco, the qulliri or herbal healer of Qulla Uta, became interested in health issues when she was 12 or 13. She noticed that Gitte and Ingrid, Swedish volunteers, ate differently, ate more salads, drank less coffee, and she decided she wanted to learn more about nutrition and healing, perhaps become a nurse. She later apprenticed with Toribio Tapia, a renowned healer in La Paz and learned about herbal healing, massage, reflexology, nutrition, and midwifery, and also attended SOBOMETRA, the Bolivian Society for Traditional Medicine. She also worked as a caretaker at Machaq Uta.

She saw Qulla Uta go through several stages of development. At one point Qulla Uta had the possibility of receiving funding and becoming more institutionalized, which brought things to a head and made them rethink what it was they really wanted. Qulla Uta has continued to work and grow on its own. However, Doña Vicky and the other Qulla Uta members agree that the next step for Qulla Uta will be to go beyond healing patients and teaching on an occasional basis to teaching more consistently about healing and spirituality. She has five children, and her mother was a founding member of the CAUP.

Don Carlos Yujra, who is better known as Don Mario, was born in Achacachi, Omasuyus province. He started learning about healing from his father who was a renowned healer, but then, for eleven years, he left this aside and first became a member of the Evangelical church and then became a *catequista*, teaching, preaching and organizing for the Catholic church. He was disappointed in both and, after doing his military service, worked in the gold mines and later as a laborer. After the death of his parents, he focused on learning more about healing and on learning the stories of the past. He lived in the houses of many healers, worked for them and learned from them, in the cities and in the countryside, where he learned to speak some Quechua. He went to sacred places and communicated with the spirits of nature and continued learning. In 1995, he was struck by lightning, which was a sign that he had become a healer on a high level. He traveled throughout the country, healing and performing rituals. He says he is grateful to Javier and to Mercedes because they've been friends for almost thirty years. He has healed them; they have fed him and later helped him publish his book about Aymara cosmovision, in 2005. After overcoming many family and health problems, he started

working with the Awichas more than twenty years ago, doing healing and rituals every week, in the Awicha “Green House”. An anthropologist, Jacqueline Michaux, supported the creation of the healing center of Qulla Uta, which by then moved several blocks away to the offices they currently have. After an attempt to function on a larger scale and after several personal clashes regarding how the organization should function, the Qulla Uta healers scaled back. Don Mario and two other healers see patients in Qulla Uta and currently he has a day job as a consultant in the Ministry of Health. He has performed rituals for peasant unions and neighborhood, city and national celebrations, and was invited to speak about Aymara spirituality in local venues. He was also invited to speak in Ecuador and later in Belgium, Germany, Holland, France and Spain. He and his wife have five children.²⁷

Critiques and responses

To complement my own observations and what CAUP members had to say to me about their experience, I also sought the opinion of people who were not members of CAUP but who knew them well. The following are observations that these outside observers have made about the CAUP experience, and some observations that CAUP insiders made to me.

The positive commentaries underscored the hard work, persistence and commitment of the CAUP and the CAUP Team members, the longevity of the organization in the face of all odds, the sense of ownership, high levels of respect, participation, and solidarity that can be found in CAUP. Most people found it surprising

that Javier and Mercedes have consistently maintained a low profile within the CAUP itself and even lower, outside of it.

This is a list of the questions raised:

- 1) why the CAUP hasn't grown any faster than it has;
- 2) if this model only works on a small scale;
- 3) why CAUP members don't seem to show important initiatives in general, to fundraise or start new projects on their own;
- 4) why the Machaq Uta teens don't seem to be enrolling in the universities at any faster rate than the median rate for other low income, indigenous teens;
- 5) why the Machaq Uta children don't have many playthings for early stimulation;
- 6) that perhaps soon the ayllu-community model of CAUP would seem less unique and appealing to members and funders, now that indigenous peoples had gained greater visibility in Bolivia and in the world;
- 7) one interviewee wondered if CAUP's practice had continued to respond to the mission they had set for themselves in the eighties;
- 8) also, if the concept of ayllu-community used by the CAUP was idealized and if their work was itself a utopia.

These are some responses, through personal observation, and through the CAUP Team when these questions were brought to their attention:

As to the first and second issues, the CAUP Team believes that it is true that the CAUP model seems to work best and perhaps only, in a small scale. As Mercedes Zerda said smiling, "Small is beautiful." And small scale efforts, small Awicha groups,

relatively small Daycares, a small Healing Center, probably have a better chance of growing “from the inside, out”, organically, and to therefore be more resilient and long-lasting. Decision making and problem solving in assemblies are more efficient in smaller groups. However, the CAUP *has* expanded and the ayllu-community system of organization *has* guided its expansion. This system allows for “nested communities” to develop and attach themselves to pre-existing ones, in what some authors have called a “fractal” pattern.

Third: As to wondering about the level of initiative on the part of the grassroots members, one of the respondents wondered if the presence of the CAUP Team and of Javier Mendoza and Mercedes Zerda in particular, might represent a subjective sense of security on the part of the grassroots members, as in, “Let them worry about this, about the funding, about the projects.” It is this aspect, the acquisition of agency through an ayllu-community system, that this thesis has focused on. At this moment it would seem that agency is strong as resistance, as commitment, as maintenance of a strong group identity, as practical needs being met, as emotional support, belonging, well-being, ownership, pride, dignity, but is a little weak on initiatives for fund raising, either new in-house projects or outside funding. This could be due to many factors, including the volunteer nature of most of the CAUP Team and that they are stretched thin as it is, to keep the CAUP running.

Fourth: As to why the teens of Machaq Uta don’t seem more interested in university educations than their peers in other environments. Perhaps the answer is that the whole idea behind indigenous empowerment is for indigenous people to choose their

own options, outside of hegemonic perspectives. Steering them towards university educations or the lifestyles that others may consider desirable is hardly coherent with the goal of self-determination.

This brings up a related question that other community experiences and strategic supporters might ask themselves: How much non-intervention is desirable? In what cases should a “strategic supporter” intervene and how? Is alerting CAUP members to “cosmetic” fixes that would make them more attractive to funders, legitimate? Should the children and teens of Machaq Uta be “wooed” or “steered” into urban Aymara lifestyles at all? Many of these decisions are up to personal and professional ethics and specific situations.

Fifth question: The same reflections regarding the validity of intervention can be made regarding the lack of “stimulating toys” in the Daycare. That query can be considered a reflection of the concerns and the culture of who asks the question. However, it is also hard to assess how much has to do with actual “choice” on the part of the Daycare: how much is this lack due to lack of funds. How much has to do with different cultural priorities and with frugality? How much with lifestyles in which there has never been enough money to spend on any extras?

Sixth: This question was about the original appeal that this project held for women and their families and if, in recent years, its appeal might have lessened. The answer is that this project is still unique, because it was generated by urban Aymara women, who organized following their own instincts and habitus, who stuck to their group through problems and crisis, and unique in that it was supported by social

community psychologists. It is a model of how poor indigenous women can persevere in their efforts to solve their problems, if they receive adequate and strategic support. As long as there are problems of lack of cultural respect, poverty, and lack of services, an ayllu-community model will likely work. There are many other questions, however, that only further research will discover: how much the CAUP will change when more of its membership is third and fourth generation Aymara migrants; when their own habitus changes and fewer people speak Aymara; and with what strength, conviction and characteristics indigenous peoples will pursue their own identity based projects in the future or if at some point they will become “mainstream” and hegemonic themselves.

Seventh: Although it was not the goal of this thesis to evaluate how close or far CAUP may be from its goals, past or present, it would seem that one of the goals of the original groups was to form a community through which they could resolve some of their practical problems. They have, to various degrees, achieved that and some of the groups have proved sustainable. On the part of the social community psychologists, their goal was to accompany this process, wherever it went. On several occasions, it almost floundered. But they stayed with the groups and their idea has held true: if the groups were allowed to find their own way, their own system of organization and management, then ownership and well-being would follow and there was a better chance that the groups would be sustainable.

The research goal of this thesis, rather, has been to explore what kind of a community the CAUP was, how they had used elements of the ayllu-community to organize, what role activism and strategic support had played, what keeps the CAUP

cohesive and sustainable, and above all, how they have achieved agency and empowerment, which are a by-product of their ayllu community system of organizing.

Eighth question: As to the comment that perhaps CAUP was “idealizing the ayllu-community” or creating “a utopia”, this issue has been mentioned earlier in Chapter IV, but to go over it again quickly: A social scientist who was familiar with CAUP laughed and said that it didn’t seem idealized but rather on a very human scale. She said she did not think that the CAUP model idealized nor essentialized culture or people, but that rather, in almost thirty years had managed to change people’s lives. She said she thought this model did not offer things it couldn’t provide and therefore did not cause frustrations. It did not propose to ‘change’ people nor ‘make them better’. Rather, this model implied that as a group, as a community, people could help one another (all paraphrased from interview). The elements of the ayllu had been put to work with no frills, as far as the model served real-life purposes. The members of CAUP seemed content to live their lives within this framework, although it implied many hours of meetings and hard work.

Conclusions for this chapter

In their efforts to find solutions for some of the pressing needs they had as rural migrants to the city of La Paz, CAUP members have found ways to provide health care, child and senior care, using as a tool some of the elements of the ayllu-community system of organizing. The elements they used are the values and some of the practices of ayllu-community living that work best for the CAUP members in the city.

As the CAUP progressively developed its own system of community, this provided members with a sense of support, belonging, ownership, dignity, well-being, and empowerment. Their efforts have been increasingly recognized by other institutions and organizations, interested in the sustainability of this model. The elements of this system are dynamic, interact with each other, and contribute to keep the CAUP community alive and moving forward.

This chapter has served to describe how ayllu-community values and practices have been used in the CAUP and how they have helped to enforce their sense of agency and empowerment.

The CAUP's work has withstood time, wear, and demographic and cultural changes in the city and in the country. The groups continue to be strategically supported in their efforts by outside activists. This is the aspect which shall be described in the next chapter.

Endnotes:

¹ Original in Spanish: "...tal vez en un principio no valoraban realmente lo que tenían entre ellas, pero poco a poco ganaron seguridad y el poder de sentir que son la base, que nuestra cultura esta viva y que ahora resurgirá con más fuerza."

² Original in Spanish: "Hay mucha de esa gente que viniendo del campo, sus vidas han cambiado mucho. [Vivir aqui y pertenecer al CAUP] les ha dado otra perspectiva de las cosas y también les ha ayudado a no sentirse menospreciados. En la Guardería eso se ha reforzado porque eran siempre vistos con desprecio como gente del campo y no se les daba su justo lugar en la ciudad. Esto es como una semilla."

³ Original in Spanish: “Estar en el CAUP me ha servido mucho...En el CAUP he aprendido a vivir en comunidad todos juntos y eso me sirve en mi vida social, en la calle, en mi trabajo...ahora yo veo que en mi vida es más lo que he aprendido aquí...yo no soy menos que mis jefes, ellos me dicen algo y yo puedo decir que no, si no me conviene, no como otros que por no perder su trabajo aceptan todo.”

⁴ Original in Spanish: “Las awichas [...] se sienten solas, pero cuando están integradas en un grupo aunque fuera para pelear, como dicen ellas, se sienten como con una protección psicológica también. A veces se solucionan problemas [...] los aymaras necesitan esa cosa de inclusión.”

⁵ Original in Spanish: “[Machaq Uta] es como una comunidad [...] aquí no hay jefes, nadie ordena, es como un pequeño pueblo aquí, donde ellos eligen a sus propias autoridades como en los pueblitos del altiplano. Los jóvenes habían sabido tener una costumbre de hacer sus reuniones también, así como las mamás en aquí [...] Las mamás pueden decidir y los niños también pueden decidir.”

⁶ Original in Spanish: “A veces un papá pegaba a su esposa, pero desde que saben que las mamás están u idas y fuertes, el papá siente que esta siendo controlado socialmente y empieza a portarse mejor, porque la guardería se convierte en una especie de comunidad rural. En el campo los hombres no se portan mal porque la comunidad les sanciona. Hay niños que son ladrones, que roban, pero aquí tenemos el control social, hay esa comunidad que no hay en otros lugares.”

⁷ Original in Spanish: “Las awichas, en vez de ir a la Policía, que representan la autoridad, que pueden intervenir en problemas familiares para que ellos decidan sobre esas cosas, imponer castigos y todo eso, llevan sus problemas a la comunidad. Esto es como una comunidad en el campo porque ha adquirido autoridad no sólo sobre la gente de aquí, sino sobre las familias que están conectadas con esas familias, u otra gente que esta conectada con ellos.”

⁸ Original in Spanish: “...en las otras guarderías son...no sé, es mas cerrado, por ejemplo es como...a mí me parece como cárcel ya son algunas guarderías, pero aquí los padres todos pueden ingresar...Yo he ido a averiguar una guardería aquí arriba, y no se puede ingresar. Yo no puedo ver el ambiente que usan los niños, pero aquí todos los padres pueden ver tambien donde están sus hijos, qué comen, todo se puede averiguar aquí...”

⁹ Original in Spanish: “...a los niños mismos desde chiquitos les hacemos notar que esto no lo decide ni la tía ni el tío, y en mi grupo ya empezamos a organizarlos, así que ellos decidan qué vamos a hacer [...] nadie impone nada...Esto es como una comunidad...”

¹⁰ Original in Spanish: “En la comunidad siempre se acoge a los huérfanos y a los más viejos, entonces hay colaboración mutua, entonces Qulla Uta (Centro de salud), Machaq

Uta (Guardería) y las Awichas es como una red, como una comunidad, por eso el nombre de comunidad de aymaras en la ciudad.”

¹¹ Original in Spanish: “Yo digo, todo es para colaborarnos, para apoyarnos, y tener un refugio aquí adentro, y para ayudar a las personas que no tengan lugar.”

¹² Original in Spanish: “La solidaridad también es otra cosa que los une a los abuelos ... en Alto Pampajasi, pasa eso, cuando hay una persona enferma y no le han ido a ver, dicen ‘porqué, qué rencor, tenemos que ir, hay que llevarle la comida, tenemos que turnarnos, tenemos que seguir haciendo esa solidaridad a una persona que necesita’ ... Ha habido también otras que daban la contra, ‘Ay, a mí qué me va a dejar pues, porqué yo voy a ir, para qué quiero ir, tiene también hijas, acaso nosotros nomás somos’, a esa abuela ya la miraban mal.”

¹³ Original in Spanish: “Les aceptamos porque también son nuestros hijos, hasta de nosotras las mamás que no tenemos hijos mayores. Sabemos que nuestros hijos pronto van a crecer y que pueden ser como esos jóvenes y que también van a necesitar la misma atención y cuidado. Les brindamos un buen ambiente aquí porque si van a otras partes tal vez hagan cosas malas, tengan malas amistades, mientras que aquí, somos hartas y les vigilamos para ver que estén bien y no hagan mal.”

¹⁴ Original in Spanish: “...la otra base rotativa sería la reciprocidad, y el otro es el *ayni*, aunque no se note yo noto que hay, yo veo a veces que las awichas tienen más dinero de financiamiento que les sobra, ese dinero mandan para los niños, porque lo que los papás dan no alcanza, igualmente, que de la Machaq Uta sobra algo, como la harina, comida, igualmente se manda, para la Qulla Uta, para las awichas.”

¹⁵ Original in Spanish: “El beneficiario, el donatario, nunca se olvida de la cooperación que ha recibido, está atento nomás...” (Medina, 2005, p. 72).

¹⁶ Original in Spanish: “La música sana...muchos niños andan confundidos, porque no se aceptan a sí mismos... lo que yo tengo que hacer es un poco, mi tarea realmente es...tal vez guiarles, darles una forma de volver a su identidad.”

¹⁷ Original in Spanish: “Eso es lo que los une, la música. En toda actividad cultural o festividad siempre está la música, en todo acontecimiento, o sea, un fallecimiento, cumpleaños, bautizo, un preste, entonces siempre en todo lado vas a ver que siempre está la música autóctona, la música nativa...La música Aymara incluye a toda la comunidad, por eso hay las danzas en ronda, no es entre dos...es toda la comunidad. Una de las funciones de la música es de ser socializador, el otro es comúnmente como medio de comunicación espiritual. Los aymaras también utilizan la música para hacer sus rituales, cuando tienen que sembrar...para hacer la challa...”

¹⁸ Original in Spanish: “Todo tienen, ahora. Todo esto tienen por mi trabajo, por mi pensamiento, por mi boca. Todo esto tienen gracias a mi, a la Dionisia, a la Manuela... éramos ocho nomás. No teníamos terreno. La Peti nos ha ayudado a conseguir. Estaba lleno de basuras, y todo hemos botado, todo hemos limpiado. La Peti mandaba cartas, cartas. Y nosotros andábamos, todas partes andábamos. Mi boca rogaba. Y al último los gringos han llegado y nos han dado plata para contruir esta casa. Ahora ustedes tienen todo. Cocina tienen, deposito tienen, plato tienen, taza tienen, todo tienen. Nosotros nada teníamos. Teníamos que prestarnos de la guardería, a veces. De nuestras casas traíamos, papita, arrocito. Y veinte centavos pagábamos cada vez. Y poquito, poquito nomás comíamos. Pero de todos los hemos preocupado. “Tan mala eres, vieja mala, porque te atajas de las puertas, porque te atajas del cemento, de la electricidad, de la agua? Acaso de ti son? – me decía la gente. Pero hemos seguido y seguido, para todos, para que tengan ustedes. Antes era joven, ahora mi cuerpo ya esta viejo. Estoy ciega, sorda, mi cuerpo esta destruido. Pero yo veo que ustedes no hacen nada, no trabajan como nosotros, rara vez tejen o hilan, son flojas, no vienen a las reuniones. Son unas ingratas.”

¹⁹ Original in Spanish: “Mi hija, me bota. Mi otra hija, me puedo quedar en su casa, pero sólo si me siento al lado de la puerta, como una *chullpa*, para no que no ocupe campo. Por eso vengo aquí. Aquí puedo hablar, puedo reir, con los otros.”

²⁰ Original in Spanish: “Yo vengo aquí porque reimos, comemos, nos reñimos... en mi casa, silencio nomás es. Aquí, me hablan, me riñen, me bendicen. Alegre paso aquí.”

²¹ Original in Spanish: “Machaq Uta es independiente... no hay un director, no hay una directora que dé ordenes, sino es la comunidad la que da ordenes, escuchando a la base, y eso es absolutamente diferente, no? Porque en otras partes siempre hay una ONG o un comedor, guardería, un director o una ONG grande de donde depende... pero Machaq Uta es independiente...”

²² Original in Spanish: “Yo creo que el CAUP y cada uno de los grupos cumplen una función que satisface una necesidad de la gente, o sea las mamás están en la guardería porque necesitan la guardería, pero aquí se sienten cómodas porque es de ellas. Ellas deciden, las awichas igual están en los grupos porque les conviene, pero también es una necesidad de inclusión, una necesidad psicológica. Yo pienso que cuando vienen del campo y sienten que ya no hay comunidad hay una sensación de orfandad, un problema psicológico, pero al formar esta comunidad artificial, se suple eso. La gente empieza a cumplir, no por los sueldos ni la comida, sino porque ya cumple esa función... porque la guardería se convierte en la comunidad del campo.”

²³ Original in Spanish: “Hemos empezado a tener contacto con otras instituciones y ONGs, y ninguno tiene ninguna similitud con lo que hacemos nosotros, eso nos esta obligando a tener mas contacto y transmitir este modelo a otros grupos de ONGs y con instituciones de El Alto. Hemos decidido hacer un intercambio y ver si pueden ellos

aplicar nuestros modelos y ellos nos han sugerido que nosotros vayamos a dar seminarios de cómo es el modelo de nuestra institución. Si sigue este cambio en el que está este gobierno, al final va a terminar nomás imponiéndose éste, de método.”

²⁴ Original in Spanish: “La diferencia entre lo que se hace en la universidad y lo que hacen ellos, es que en la universidad, sólo se habla. En el CAUP, no se habla, se hace.”

²⁵ Original in Spanish: “El Machaq Uta es una organización que se ha creado en base a la cultura Aymara. Esto es como una comunidad. Aunque nos riñamos, sabemos que en ningún lugar va a haber esa ayuda, esa organización, la unión de saber que no dependemos, y que nosotros nomás podemos llevar adelante y no abandonar. Cada mamá es como dueña. Esto es como su casa, y no van a dejar que esto se pierda.”

²⁶ Original in Spanish: “Necesitamos una radio, necesitamos un canal de televisión para hablar de nuestras cosas, sobre nuestra cultura. Podríamos tener radionovelas, hablar sobre medicina, poner músicas. Tenemos todas clases de conocimientos, pero no tenemos financiamiento. De esa forma podríamos colaborar, mientras podamos nosotros hablar, decidir...”

²⁷ My interview notes were completed with bibliographical material from the introduction to his book *Los Grandes Pensamientos de Nuestros Antepasados. Laq'a Achachilanakan Jach'a Tayka Amuyt'awinakapa* (2005, pp. xii-xiv).

CHAPTER VII
DONORS, VOLUNTEERS, AND SOCIAL COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGISTS:
STRATEGIC SUPPORTERS

“Activists” and “strategic supporters”

The term “activist” is not often used in Bolivia. Where and when the term is used, activists are considered to be individuals who have chosen to devote their time and efforts to support causes in which they believe. They are committed to a cause and have strong connections to communities of other activists, but may have no personal connection at all to specific grassroots groups. Therefore, activists can be outsiders or members of grassroots groups.

Within that broad spectrum, it could be said that the members of the CAUP community - including the CAUP Team members, the two social community psychologists Javier Mendoza and Mercedes Zerda, the local and foreign volunteers and donors to the CAUP - are in some ways activists, mostly because they believe in and work for the common cause of upholding the urban Aymaras right to their identity and culture within the framework of the Bolivian nation.

However, more than focus on ‘activism’ in the sense of work being done outside of the organization to promote it in the world, this chapter focuses on the unique relationship between the CAUP membership and the activists that support them, and

explains how this relationship is significantly differently from those typically found in NGOs and among the networks of international activism (which focus on drawing attention to the organization). While indigenous movements often have contact with networks of international activists around the world, the CAUP's network is smaller-scale, composed of friends, families and personal contacts. These "human scale" supporters have maintained person to person contact with the CAUP members, allowing the CAUP and their donors and volunteers to be more personally responsible and accountable to each other in subjective and practical ways. The support of the CAUP has come from sources that were drawn inwards, towards the grassroots community, in ways coherent with the CAUP's pursuit of financial and decision making autonomy. The unique relationship these activists have with CAUP can be termed "strategic support".

Foreign volunteers

The international supporters of CAUP (mainly Swedes) have not acted as "international activists" on their behalf. According to Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, "[a] transnational advocacy network includes those actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse and dense exchanges of information and services" (1999, p. 89). International activism helps to "frame issues by identifying and providing convincing explanations for powerful symbolic events, which in turn become catalysts for the growth of networks" (1999, p. 96). The work of international activist networks is to obtain international exposure for groups in need so that they can find the appropriate forums for their

demands to be heard and addressed outside of their own countries. While individuals and organizations from Sweden have been and continue to be of support to CAUP, they have not focused on filling the role described by Keck and Sikkink. The Swedish volunteers have not played an important role in bringing the CAUP issues to the center of a globalized stage and the media because the CAUP's work, historically, has been mostly "internal", focused upon drawing resources inward for the development of the community itself. In the past few years the CAUP has started gaining visibility internationally as a community model and has been engaging with other grassroots actors and activists, providing support and counsel to Awicha groups organizing in outlying areas. But they have done this on a small, person-to-person basis.

Svalorna, an organization funded by the government of Sweden, has been a long time advocate for indigenous empowerment and has sent paid "volunteers" from Sweden to live and work in Pampajasi with CAUP. These volunteers were hired for a period of time (usually a year) to perform different support tasks identified as needs by the various groups (Machaq Uta, Awichas). Not all of the volunteers had the same impact on the CAUP community. Some were not a good fit and others, due to bureaucratic paperwork or other reasons, showed up a year or more after their presence was requested, when the needs of the CAUP had changed.

Many volunteers, however, have made lasting contributions to CAUP. One of them renewed her contract with Svalorna and CAUP five times, staying in Pampajasi five years, helping out at the daycare and teaching the children music. One of her students is now in charge of all the music programs of CAUP. Javier Chipana, "Javicho", tells the

story of how she would close the door and say, “Let your friends go out and play – I want you to stay here for a few minutes and learn this”. She taught him and a generation of daycare youngsters how to play Andean instruments, donating part of her salary to support their projects and playing her guitar and singing on the streets to raise money for the Daycare. She is often remembered by the Awichas and the Machaq Uta mothers of that time.

Another Swedish volunteer spent a few weeks in the rural highland community of Kusijata, the birthplace and family home of one of the Machaq Uta founders. The new Kusijata community organization, which CAUP had mentored in its infancy, was active and several local outlying communities in the region had also started to organize. This volunteer introduced the Kusijata community to a group of Swedish friends of hers who later donated funds to start building a community center there.

Also, there was the case of a Swedish volunteer who taught the awichas exercises to keep their joints healthy. Almost twenty years later, he visited the Awicha groups with his wife and little daughter and he found Don Juan, member of the Awichas whom he had entrusted with this task of continuing to teach the exercises, very elderly and bent over double, but still rousing the Awichas to do their exercises. The former volunteer left each Awicha group a picture of himself and his family, which hangs in their meeting rooms as a reminder of the personal connections forged between them that have persisted through time.

There were also other types of lasting contributions, like that of a Swedish volunteer who became godmother to a CAUP mother’s child. When the volunteer left,

the mother knit an Alpaca sweater and gave it to the volunteer as a gift. The Swedish volunteer took it home and soon many of her friends and family were asking her where she had bought it. This was the beginning of a knitting project that involved between 15 and 20 Machaq Uta mothers, who for many years knitted sweaters to be sold in Swedish stores, providing the daycare with much needed funds for the children's meals.

Moved by the experience of her daughter's volunteer time in Pampajasi, a Swedish mother formed a "sister group" of "Swedish awichas" with her friends. These senior Swedish women received Alpaca wool, spun by the CAUP awichas, knit and sold the scarves and sweaters from this wool and sent the money back to contribute to support the Awicha groups. At one point a group of them came to visit the awichas. Twenty years later, at the time of this research, all but one of the "Swedish awichas" had died, as had most of the original group of Bolivian awichas. The one remaining Swedish grandma continues to send a monetary contribution each year for the yearly celebration dinner of the awichas. Her picture is still hanging in a place of honor on the back wall of the Green House Awicha meeting room. The Awichas talk about her as if she were an old friend.

These are other examples mentioned to me by the members of the CAUP. At one point, a group of Swedish volunteers advocated for a small stipend to be paid by an NGO to Bolivian volunteers, which temporarily provided an income for them. Other Swedish volunteers collected funds among themselves and sent them every year to Machaq Uta, to contribute to the children's meals. They continued to do this for more than two decades and only last year wrote to say it was no longer possible for them to continue. Another Swedish volunteer's boyfriend donated a TV set and some money with which a group of

budding musicians from the Daycare bought a VCR and some recording equipment that successive generations of kids have continued to use. The presence of these volunteers also provided the CAUP with examples of contrasting lifestyles, values, tastes, peer and gender relations.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the Svalorna volunteers played an important role in CAUP, both through their direct contributions in Pampajasi and through the contributions and connections they maintained for many years after they returned to Sweden. In many cases, the private donations received from Sweden were the result of these early volunteers' experiences and their own personal networks.

The CAUP groups have reciprocated by welcoming these volunteers in their midst, feeding them each time they visited, teaching them some Spanish and Aymara, teaching them about their customs and rituals, inviting them to their homes and to public events and giving them lodging, friendship and support. Also, the awichas offer to pray for the people who help them and the older members of the CAUP community always tell stories of what the volunteers and donors did for them and about the things that visitors and volunteers learned from them. I heard several comments along these lines: "We helped them figure things out...before, they didn't know how to manage, here in Bolivia...They didn't know anything, about the buses, or where to eat...They got sick all the time, and now they manage. Some have learned how to knit, others to weave or about herbs...now they know where to buy things and how to get around."

Another form of reciprocation, though more indirect, has been that throughout the years, Qulla Uta, the Awichas and the Machaq Uta mothers have contributed to society,

science, and learning through their enthusiastic participation in research and program development, health, education, psychology, literacy and art projects, and through their interactions with academics and students from many fields and countries.

The participation of the Machaq Uta children in several prototype experiences with interactive exhibits was essential to the development of the Children's Museum of La Paz. CAUP members have also contributed to inter-cultural learning through their personal contacts with local and foreign visitors. Volunteers and students from private schools, expecting to give but not to receive, have enriched their views and changed how they thought of themselves and of indigenous people through their interactions with the Awicha groups. For example, a few years ago teenagers from an expensive private school in La Paz came to help the Awichas of Kupini work on their community center and were surprised to see that they could not keep pace with the Awicha members. They learned about practical construction tasks and gained respect for these old men and women and for a lifestyle and values very different from their own.

Donors

Since its early days (early to mid-1980s), CAUP has tried to find sources of funding that would allow the groups to have greater autonomy. Such sources are hard to find and often their support is temporary.

As previously described, Svalorna of Sweden has been a long time supporter. However, in recent years their donor support has started to change. The two young main representatives of Svalorna explained to me that currently Svalorna no longer places as

much emphasis on the work of paid volunteers, because its outcomes are unpredictable and hard to assess. The current Swedish government has put pressure on Svalorna to drop the old volunteer support system and support identity based grassroots organizations only through shorter term projects with quantifiable results.

Two Bolivian organizations, one called Horizontes and another called Fundación San Luis, currently support CAUP's work, as does an organization based in London called HELPAGE. The Awicha groups had been undergoing a funding "boom", because they complied with the "native culture", "self-management" and "senior citizens" requirements prioritized by the donor organizations that funded them. However, identity based work is difficult to quantify and recently HELPAGE has received instructions from London to demand more specific indicators of impact. According to Mercedes Zerda: "The personal and individual connection that we had [with the donors] is starting to dissipate. The same is happening with everybody and if the CAUP needs foreign cooperation funds [in the future], it will have to see what strategy to use because little by little all of the funding agencies are going in that direction and it is important to prepare for it [...] [because] for work such as ours, the best underwriting is private, from small groups and without so many conditions..."

Local support and volunteers

Local support has been essential for the CAUP's development. For example, Chitakolla, an Indianist publication, which ceased to exist in the early 1990s, provided coverage of CAUP activities and published interviews of CAUP members during the

1980s. In the first years of its existence, the CAUP drew the attention of some young local volunteers, among them Gerardo Pacheco. Together with the daycare children, he put together several plays and socio-dramas, including *Remigian Sarnakawipa* (The Wanderings [“Andanzas”] of Remigia), about a young migrant Aymara woman in the city. The theater group was called *Wiñayataki*, “Forever”. Gerardo worked with the children for about ten years. Other young volunteers got together to play music with the daycare youngsters or the awichas and would come to do group activities with them.

The CAUP Team came together almost six years ago. They are young, urban Aymaras, CAUP members and residents of Pampajasi who perform specific support duties. These duties include big picture book keeping (the group accounting is done by the group members themselves), grant writing and the coordination of the three CAUP components. Twelve out of the 14 members of the CAUP Team are volunteers and do not receive salaries. Their strategic support “keeps the flame going” by keeping the CAUP ideologically and administratively cohesive.

Social community psychology, a form of strategic support that blends science and politics

Sociologists and anthropologists who feel the need to participate supporting social movements often find themselves torn between the need for distance and impartiality and the need for commitment and action (Kay Warren and Jean Jackson, Charles Hale, Lynn Stephen, Joann Rappaport). They have written about ways to articulate both through “interethnic dialogue”, “power sharing”, “consultation”, “collaborative research”, and

others.

From a psychological perspective, social community psychology has offered Mercedes Zerda and Javier Mendoza the possibility of doing both activism and science at the same time, not by attempting to find a place where both academia and activism abut, but by making one serve the other. Social community psychologists serve communities by becoming part of the community and helping it to heal through what they call “non-directive action”, which in this chapter has been included as a form of “local strategic support” to the community.

Mercedes Zerda and Javier Mendoza have worked with the CAUP for twenty five years, supporting them as the groups defined who they were and what they wanted to do. They supported these groups through trial and error for 13 years and only in 1996 they discovered that similar practices were taking place in other countries and that their work could be considered part of a new trend called social community psychology. Since the late 1990s they have participated in various seminars locally and abroad in which experiences in social community psychology in different countries have been discussed, each tailored to their particular circumstance and in which the psychologists immersed themselves in subaltern communities.

Javier Mendoza explains that the idea of social community psychology started in the United States and in Europe. The subjects of social community psychology are not individual people, but communities. The psychologist’s role is to support the community in its development, without proposing outside solutions. The psychologist is part of the community and acts as a catalyst, using community resources in order to effect change

towards empowerment. Social community psychology is a compromise between science and politics. A cause is served, but there is also a contribution to science: “We realized this was an added benefit; we discovered that by practicing social community psychology with ethnic groups there would also be a resulting wealth of knowledge for the development of science.”

Javier and Mercedes explain that social community psychology is the only theoretical contribution that South America has made to psychology. The main difference between social community psychology in the US and in Latin America is that in South America practitioners seek “the generation of a psycho-social practice directed towards the solution of social problems and to social transformation, with the participation of the interested groups”, involving “new social actors” and “a new role for psychologists”. In the U.S., social community psychology involves working with groups of patients in an institutional setting and the goal is to achieve the creation of a psychological practice that responds to the demands of greater social legitimacy, the transformation of institutions and changes in psychologists’ traditional role (Montero, 2004, pp. 54, 55).

To the original conceptions of a psychology based on the community generated in the US and in Europe, Latin American practitioners added the 1970’s educational theories of liberation of Paulo Freire. According to Javier, within Social Community Psychology:

...the psychologist serves the community and the community will set the horizon [...] This psychology cannot escape its social commitment. Its field is the poor, the indigenous people, the marginal populations, the old people, people who are living badly because of situations of domination within society [...] this is a

method of research which is called participation and action research; action is to undertake things together and ends in action to change their environment because the community decides to effect change in a certain direction. Because of linguistic and cultural differences, we discovered that this Aymara community wanted things that you would never have guessed that they wanted, when they have participation, so then it turned out to be much more radical than just “doing things with the community”, in this case, with communities of Bolivian Indians. [If you allow people participation] the goals end up being different, also the ways to achieve those goals and the whole thing has to start out differently. Things work out differently than you would have thought, but it is the only way.¹

Two social community psychologists and a group that was ready to self-manage

This is the background of the two social community psychologists that have supported the work of the CAUP groups since 1983.

Javier Mendoza was born in Sucre in 1944, grew up there and studied Psychology in Dartmouth College (Hanover, N.H) and in The New School for Social Research (N.Y.). He has taught in two universities of La Paz, the Catholic University and the University of San Andrés, written articles and published two books on historical topics, *La Mesa Coja* and *La Duda Fecunda*.

Mercedes Zerda was born in La Paz in 1957. She lived in the city of Santa Cruz until she finished high school and then studied psychology in the Catholic University of the city of La Paz. She got a degree in social gerontology in FLACSO (Latin American School of Social Sciences) of Argentina and has participated in academic conferences in many countries and in the United Nations. She has organized several research projects on old age and senior citizens' needs in different cultures and written several articles and the book *Vejez y Pobreza en Bolivia: La vision de las personas de edad*.

Mercedes and Javier were the first to practice social community psychology in

Bolivia and organized events in the country regarding its practice in 1991 and 1992. In recent years, they have been invited to speak at ten Mexican universities on their work in Pampajasi.

Back in the early 1980s, they had decided to live and work in the outskirts of La Paz. They were both working as psychologists for a large NGO on a project related to children with learning disabilities. Once the project ended, the parents of these children wanted to continue working together. The first projects that the parents and the psychologists initiated, still through the NGO, were a daycare called *Wawa Uta* (The House of the Children) and literacy classes for the mothers. Since the 1980s was the time of massive inflation, project funds in American dollars multiplied in Bolivian currency and the mothers thought that the best way to invest this money was to buy a piece of property, about 1000 meters square, in the nearby valley of Chicani and plant onions and other vegetables on it. They also wanted to start a pig farm. The NGO said that purchasing the property in the groups' name would not be possible and that the NGO was not interested in planting onions or in a pig farm project. At that point, the group decided that it was going to go its own way and try to self-manage their own projects. They visited Javier and Mercedes in their home, who at that point had lost their jobs with the NGO, brought them a gift and asked them to continue supporting them in their efforts. Perhaps constituting a metaphor for this experience, the gift was a small stove that Mercedes and Javier continue to use to cook their meals every day. At that point neither Mercedes nor Javier had jobs, nor the group any funding. Javier and Mercedes decided to live and work in Pampajasi, away from the political repression taking place in Bolivia

and taking a break from academia, NGOs and institutions.

One of the CAUP founding members, Doña Angélica, recalls that Peti (Mercedes) Zerda, accompanied the group in their efforts to organize. She recalls when Mercedes went with them to the philanthropic organization OFASA, from the Adventist church, to seek funds.

Peti must have been 18 when she started working with us [She was actually 25 or 26] [...] We had our daycare with [the NGO] San Gabriel, which was called Wawa Uta. But we didn't like that our financing came through other people, we wanted it to come directly to us. So we left San Gabriel and started to work on our own. We also wanted to start a soup kitchen, a place where people could eat for 50 *centavos* (cents). I accepted to be president and take care of the paperwork and organize the soup kitchen. Our soup kitchen operated in Doña Fermina's house, out on the avenue. We received dry supplies from OFASA and got a little bit of vegetables and meat through the contributions of the mothers. Each person brought their own dish and their own spoon, every day. We have made a lot of progress since then and Peti has always supported us.²

In other countries social community psychologists create communities and then work with them; in Pampajasi, Mercedes and Javier worked with migrant families who already had a habitus of community. Javier said: "We were lucky in that the people we were working with already belonged to a community, so it was only a matter of that community continuing to reproduce..."

Being There

Mercedes says that an important part of what they did to support the CAUP in its development was to just be there:

The psychologist has to participate [...] and be available. Deep changes cannot be accomplished if the community does not feel that they [the psychologists] are a part of it. Psychologists don't ask people to change how they act, they only listen. If you are working with a community, you have to live with them and follow the life rhythms of the community.³

Mercedes mentioned in her interview that it wasn't easy to refrain from trying to direct or instruct:

Meetings were very informal. People just talked and that was more common among the women. They had their children there and nobody was bothered by that. When we began we wanted them to be the ones to do things, we didn't want to impose anything, not even the idea of what a meeting should be like. We [Mercedes and Javier] wouldn't have been able to do this if just one of us had been there...⁴

Letting be and answering questions with questions

An important part of Mercedes Zerda and Javier Mendoza's work was to provide support in a nondirective way. This was particularly difficult in view of the paternalistic attitudes of non-indigenous people towards indigenous people, in Bolivia. The leftist intellectuals in particular, considered that it was their role to instruct and guide indigenous movements. This is an excerpt from Javier Mendoza's interview:

We did not come here to apply any theory we had learned in the University. As psychologists, the basic principle we applied in Pampajasi was that we were going to do what people wanted to do and nothing outside of that. And when the people here asked us, 'what do we do?' we'd say, 'figure it out'. And then they would search inside themselves. As Roxana [a CAUP Team member] says, everybody is more or less indigenous in this country [...] so looking inside themselves, which was the only thing they knew to do, they started to do things and we just reinforced them in it. It has been very easy and simple because people just did things in accordance to who they were. I don't think we are unique in this, maybe

there are other experiences like this in other places, but I feel that this is just part of what was going on in the country and that has generated the outcome that exists now. We have an indigenous president [...] because it was already in the air. We have all contributed our grain of sand for this to happen. There was something going on in this period, in this time, which has given us momentum.⁵

Once asked by Javier how the women of the original group would define “psychologist” in Aymara, they conferred and told him that the term would be *qananchiri*, or person who lights the way, because of the role Javier and Peti played in supporting without assuming leadership or ownership over the results obtained by the organization. This term and that of “translator” has since been used by some non-indigenous supporters of Indianist causes.

Boosting self-confidence

According to many CAUP members the presence of these psychologists was supportive and a reminder that what they were doing was valid. One CAUP Team member emphasized that Javier and Mercedes’ work was directed towards strengthening group member’s self-esteem and sense of empowerment:

The role of Peti and Doc...they arrived in a time when Indians were despised, there was total discrimination and racism and when Indians came to the city from the countryside they felt discriminated against. They even preferred their children to change their last names. It was worse if they didn’t speak any Spanish, only Aymara. Their self-esteem was zero; they didn’t speak to their children in Aymara so they would not suffer the same discrimination as them. So Peti and Javier helped them feel more self-esteem. That has been their main role. It’s taken years, but now people know that they are capable...⁶

The doors of Mercedes and Javier’s house were open almost all of the time, and in

times of personal conflict the teens, the women and men would often go to their house to sit and talk. Mercedes mentioned to me that after a while both parties became more knowledgeable and aware of their cultural differences: while her personal advice was deemed appropriate in some cases, in others, for example regarding gender roles or young sons and daughters' sexual behaviors, mothers usually preferred to stick with the more traditional Andean value systems.

Opening doors

Doña Mery Salgado of the CAUP Team remembers that in the first years, the women themselves would often come up with ideas and seek funding on their own.

When she was young and was appointed as part of the board, or *directiva*, Mery remembers going to knock on the doors of several embassies and securing some funding from the Canadian Embassy. On other occasions, Javier and Mercedes helped locate possible sources of funding and on the group's request they accompanied groups to the donating agency's offices. Don Mario of Qulla Uta related to me that Peti and Javier had opened doors for them to places where Indians could not walk in alone. He said that Peti and Javier accompanied them and then people just had to listen to what they had to say, because otherwise, people would often say, "*Hijo* [son], come back tomorrow"; they wouldn't listen.

As outside observers have mentioned to me, it is hard to say how much would have been accomplished without the presence of these two psychologists. However, it is clear that their presence has been helpful to increase the access of the group to offices and

to make the first contact. As a CAUP Team member said:

...once the concept of the ayllu starts changing to that of an ayllu in the city, it becomes an urban community. Its challenges and problems are different because the country is changing. Things can still be resolved through a community system, it is efficient. Consultants are not necessary, like Peti and Javier, to perform that role. Solutions are found within the group, but trying to implement, to make connections with the q'ara world, that is their role, that is what Javier and Peti represent.⁷

In the first years, when it came time to present the group's first project to potential funders, Javier and Mercedes helped the group present its own case and explain what they intended to do. They brought a tape recorder to one of the meetings that the original group, precursor to the CAUP groups, held each week. The women themselves explained what they wanted on tape, in Aymara and in Spanish and the tapes were mailed to the donor agencies. This is how one of the CAUP members remembers this:

They [the mothers of the first group] did not know how to read and write. All of this came from their hearts, in other words, the intention, the organization. [...] They were the ones who did the projects. They didn't write them, say, in an institution, they did them in a house, just like I am recording right now. They recorded, 'this is what we want'; 'then we will do this'; 'we already have this'; they would explain. They said, 'we are already organized'. And that's what they sent out to friends [...], to the Swedish organization called Svalorna, the Swallows of Sweden...⁸

Conclusions for this chapter

The CAUP was distinctly different from the development projects of the time which were sponsored by the NGOs and assumed that the indigenous peoples had to learn new skills and undergo significant changes in order to "develop" and make their lives

"better". In the NGO model people were recruited to form groups and "natural leaders" were groomed by being taught leadership skills, organizational and reporting formats and to act as middle-men to help the other group members overcome the limitations of their poverty and their lifestyles. NGOs and other donor agencies founded, funded and managed projects to meet goals established within the values and priorities of the NGO rather than those of the target population. They imposed organizational structures in conflict with Aymara cultural values, required external control of all spending and frequently retained the physical ownership of the projects. The NGOs' postcolonial attitude toward Aymara competencies and their vertical organizational style with all decisions, from goal setting to the NGO controlled expenditure of funds, were in sharp contrast to the CAUP experience of setting its own goals and priorities and retaining autonomy in all phases of decision making and the management of funds.

If activism is limited to believing that counter hegemonic cultural identities and values have a right to exist within Bolivian society and working for the right of Aymara people to live as cultural beings, then the members of the CAUP, its donors and volunteers are all activists. In the sense that activism is working on an international level and within activist networks, activism is taking place increasingly, as the CAUP members speak more and more about their experience to visitors, NGOs, organizations, and researchers.

However, most of the support that the CAUP has received and has generated through its trajectory has been geared inwards, towards the community. This "centripetal" force has been called "strategic support" in this chapter, and has taken place

mostly through personal connections and timely strategic support to the CAUP community.

Donors and volunteers have been instrumental to the efforts of the urban CAUP community to heal and overcome the inequalities, marginalization and lack of respect that Aymara people have suffered in Bolivia since colonial times. Donors and volunteers have defended the right of CAUP members to live as cultural beings with psychological and social well-being by strategically supporting the efforts of the CAUP community to continue to exist as a community and their efforts to provide services to its members.⁹

This chapter has described how possible differences could be found between “activism” and “strategic support” and how both have taken place to support the work of the CAUP. However, in the case of the strategic support efforts to support the community, as Javier Mendoza said in his interview and was quoted in chapter VI: “It will probably take much more than 25 years to undo the profound effects of discrimination, racism and exclusion of the Aymara people of Bolivia.”

Endnotes:

¹ Original in Spanish: “El psicólogo esta al servicio de la comunidad, la comunidad es la que marcará el horizonte [...] es una psicología que no puede escaparse del compromiso político, social, está definido su campo de acción, los pobres, los indígenas, los marginados, los viejos, la gente que está viviendo mal por una situación de dominación en la sociedad [...] Este es un método de investigación que se llama investigación-acción participativa; la acción es hacer entre todos, termina en una acción para cambiar su entorno, porque la comunidad ha decidido que quiere cambiarlo en cierta dirección. Por la diferencia cultural lingüística que hay hemos descubierto que esta comunidad aymara

quiere cosas que tu no suponías que podían querer, cuando tienen participación, entonces era mucho más radical que simplemente hacer cosas con la comunidad, en este caso con comunidades de indios bolivianos. Los objetivos acaban siendo diferentes, y las formas de conseguir esos objetivos, y hay que replantearlos desde el comienzo. Entonces resultó que era más diferente de lo que pensábamos, pero es la única forma.”

² Original in Spanish: “La Peti debe haber tenido 18 cuando empezó a trabajar con nosotros. Teníamos nuestra guardería en San Gabriel, que se llamaba Wawa Uta. Pero no nos gustaba que nuestro financiamiento venía a través de otras personas. Queríamos que venga directamente a nosotros. Así fue que nos fuimos de San Gabriel y empezamos a trabajar solas. Queríamos también que haiga un comedor, un lugar donde la gente pueda comer por 50 centavos. Yo acepté ser presidente, encargarme de los trámites y organizar el comedor. Nuestro comedor funcionaba en la casa de Doña Fermina, en la avenida. Recibíamos alimentos secos de OFASA, y un poquito de verdura y de carne de lo que traían las mamás. Cada día cada persona traía su propio plato y su propia cuchara. Hemos avanzado mucho desde entonces, y la Peti siempre nos ha apoyado.”

³ Original in Spanish: “El psicólogo tiene que ser parte [...] y estar disponible. No se puede lograr cambios profundos si la comunidad siente que ellos no son parte. Si estás trabajando con la comunidad debes estar con ellos y seguir el ritmo vivencial de la comunidad.”

⁴ Original in Spanish: “Las reuniones son bien informales. La gente charla y eso se da más entre las mujeres, con sus wawas y todo y a nadie le molesta. Cuando nosotros empezamos queríamos que todo hagan entre ellos, no queríamos imponer ni siquiera esto de lo que es una reunión. No hubiéramos podido si uno nomás de los dos estaba solo...”

⁵ Original in Spanish: “Nosotros no vinimos a aplicar ninguna teoría que habíamos aprendido en la Universidad. Como psicólogos, el principio fundamental que aplicamos en Pampajasi era que íbamos a hacer lo que la gente quería hacer y nada más, y cuando la gente venía a preguntarnos cómo iban a hacer les decíamos ‘vean Uds.’ y entonces veían dentro de ellos. Como dice Roxana todos son más o menos indígenas en este país, entonces mirando dentro de ellos, que era lo único que sabían, empezaron a hacer y eso nomás reforzamos. Y ha sido muy simple y sencillo porque la gente ha sido lo que era, yo no creo que seamos los únicos, tal vez hay otros parecidos en otras partes, pero yo siento que esto es parte de lo que estaba pasando en el país y ha desembocado en lo que es ahora. Tenemos un presidente indígena y todo eso, porque es una cosa que estaba en el aire, entre todos hemos puesto nuestro granito de arena para que sucediera, es una cosa de la época, del tiempo, que nos ha impulsado.”

⁶ Original in Spanish: “El rol de la Peti y el Doc, ellos llegaron en la época en que se despreciaba al indio, había una total discriminación y racismo y el indio que venía del campo acá se sentía discriminado. Ellos han preferido que sus hijos se cambien el apellido [...] y peor si no hablaban castellano solo aymara, en su autoestima estaban por

los suelos, no les hablaban a sus hijos en aymara para que no sufran la misma discriminación. Entonces la Peti y el Javier han hecho levantar la autoestima, ese ha sido el rol fundamental [...] han tenido que pasar años, pero ahora ellos saben que son capaces...”

⁷Original in Spanish: “...una vez que va cambiando el concepto de “ayllu” traído a la ciudad, ya es una comunidad urbana, los desafíos y los problemas que se presentan son distintos porque el país está cambiando. Todavía se puede resolver todo de forma comunitarios, es eficiente, no se necesitan consultores como la Peti y el Javier que hagan un poco ese rol, las soluciones que se deciden en grupo. Pero tratar de implementar, tratar de hacer conexiones con el mundo q’ara, ese es el rol que el Javier y le Peti representan.”

⁸Original in Spanish: “Las mamás, como no sabían escribir, todo les ha salido de su corazón, o sea la intención, la organización también [...] ellas han sido las que hacían proyectos, no hacían así en institutos, hacían en su casita, como ahorita estoy grabando. Grababan, así queremos, despues vamos a hacer esto, ya tenemos esto, explicaban, ya estamos organizadas. Entonces así hacían sus proyectos y eso mandaban adonde los amigos [...], a esa organización sueca, se llama Svalorna, las Golondrinas de Suecia...”

⁹For more information on participatory and long-haul support of local community organizing in other countries that have very different characteristics, see two examples: <http://www.uaacc.habari.co.tz/index.html>, about the UACC, United African Alliance Community Center, which began in 1972 in Tanzania and became a registered non-profit 1991; and also the book “Las veredas de la incertidumbre” about the PRATEC in San Miguel de Tzinacapan, Mexico, that started in 1974.

CHAPTER VIII

REFLECTIONS ON THIS RESEARCH PROCESS

What to include, what to discard

When writing the results of my fieldwork with the CAUP groups, I often asked myself how to best portray what I had seen, heard, and experienced. Some of my questions had to do with the selection of which parts of research journals, notes and interviews to include and which to discard, what parts best served my outline and yet still contributed to present an image of the CAUP as the whole, as “a cultural portrait” (Caughey, in Kendall, 2006, p. 25). Other questions and decisions were about the writing itself and about the theoretical framework that would be suitable for this thesis.

Therefore, the questions, decisions, and choices I made in order to describe the CAUP involved issues of representation and researcher responsibility, in order to give an “impression of ‘the truth’” (Smith, 1999, p. 35).

On the non-neutrality of research

As quoted in the Introduction, Lynn Stephen wrote that processes do not “exist in the world waiting to be committed to paper”, but rather come alive through the interactions between researchers and actors. To this I would add that the processes and events described also come alive and are communicated to the reader through the choices

that researchers make surrounding modalities of research and the choices of the concepts and theories that they will use to frame these descriptions.

Therefore, while the researcher is trained to observe, interview, take notes, write, and to do so ethically, the researcher's choices of theories and language influence how the information will be collected, analyzed and then presented to the reader, and whether the results of the research can or will be returned to the community that has been researched.

The researcher is also the product of his or her own social and cultural background, upbringing, and academic experiences. Therefore, while it is true that "fieldwork keeps us honest" (Mallon, 1994, p. 1507), I believe that some background on the researcher, on how the ideas to conduct the research and the writing came to be, contribute to the reader's better understanding and assessment of the end result.

Theoretical frameworks

The origins of the word "theory" are rooted in Greek terms related to "seeing", to speculating, developing hypotheses, and creating systems of ideas. Theories attempt to describe realities through "theoretical meta-languages", which not only have the power to observe reality, but to affect and transform it (Frow, 2005, pp. 347, 348). Particularly in the social sciences, the relationship between observation and theory and between researcher and researched has been increasingly questioned since the 1960s.

As tools to see, speculate, hypothesize, create systems of ideas, and to frame the research presented in this thesis, I have used some of the theories of subalternity, agency,

social movements, the habitus and community. Through these “eyes”, I have proposed a way in which the “realities” of the CAUP member experience can be portrayed. None of these choices can be considered neutral or apolitical because neither the theories nor the decisions to use them occur within a void.

The politics of location

The social and cultural origin of the researcher is an important issue when doing research, and particularly if the research takes place in the researcher’s country of origin. Currently researchers tend to include some information about themselves in their articles and books in an effort to make interactions between researchers and actors more explicit. It informs the reader as to where the researcher is speaking from, so it can be factored into the text. For example, when I read Ana María Alonso’s article *Conforming Disconformity: “Mestizaje”, Hybridity and the Aesthetics of Mexican Nationalism*, it added an important dimension to know that she had a personal engagement with the topics she was writing about and to learn how she experienced being perceived sometimes as white, sometimes as off-white, sometimes as brown (2004, p. 459). Many other authors do more than inform about their “position”, they put the issue of their own gender, race and class close to the center of their writing, as for example, Diane M. Nelson, (1999) when she talks about “body politics” in Guatemala, or Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) when she talks about “borderland” issues of culture, mestizaje, and sexuality from the perspective of her own experience.

It would seem that describing the work of the CAUP does not warrant as much. However, I also don't believe that neutralizing the awareness of ourselves or others as "the 'other', by integrating it back into a framework which absorbs all differences and contradictions" (Richards quoted by Morley, 1996, p. 336) is an option. If the researcher, local or not, has a perception of any "disconformities" (Alonso, 2004, p. 464), she can help "locate" the kind of relationships that exist between the researcher and the men and women participating in the research and that lurk between the lines of this "depiction of truth" (p. 337).

Therefore, instead of ignoring the issue of hegemonic perspectives and viewpoints by using postmodernist theories to "undercut all claims to the truth" (Richards, again quoted by Morley, 1996, p. 337), or denouncing these "dislocations" as something that happens outside of the realm of research, researchers can acknowledge their existence and try to locate their perspectives and visions within a framework that includes them.

I will quote here what Lynn Stephen wrote about "the politics of location", which applies very well to what I have attempted to say in this chapter, about the importance of acknowledging the power relations between researcher and subjects/actors:

By invoking this term ["the politics of location"], I follow the lead of Interpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan (1994) who propose that we acknowledge the differences between ourselves as researchers and those we may collaborate with and that we situate what we are doing in the transnational political economy and take responsibility for the ways that difference is coded in national and transnational structures of capital, power and culture. (Stephens, 2006, p. 322)

Research and writing are acts of representation. Therefore, when researchers, particularly “local” researchers make explicit their relationship with the subjects of research, the subjects/actors and the readers can integrate those elements into their reading and assessment of the resulting texts.

My own habitus

First, as a person and as a researcher who is working in her own country, I usually represent “the other” to the urban Aymara of my city. This positioning begins with my family origin. My mother’s family members were wealthy landowners before the 1952 Revolution. After the Revolution, my grandfather was exiled to Perú until he died and the family haciendas were redistributed among the *campesinos* (peasants). Part of my family has “conservative” views and part, more liberal views. They usually define themselves as “non-indigenous” or “white”. The people who describe themselves as indigenous in Bolivia usually tend to use the idea and image of families such as mine to define themselves as indigenous, oppressed and discriminated against. While this issue of origins is not insurmountable, it affects how I am perceived within Bolivian society. As to my own views about my origin, they probably had a role in my decision to climb the mountain towards Pampajasi in my mid twenties, to learn more about what later became the CAUP. However, many more years would pass, including 12 years of living in the US and visiting Bolivia for a few months each year, before I came to a few more realizations about my own “location”.

In 2006, I decided to write about the CAUP because in my mind and my experience, their work challenged the relative comfort zone of post-colonial *status quo* within which I had been raised. The CAUP's work, based on agency and empowerment, was different from what was being done by the NGOs I knew and where I had worked at the time and seemed relevant and meaningful to me. Silvia Rivera, a Bolivian sociologist, mentioned in her work the apparent contradiction of herself being a *mestiza* who was deeply involved in indigenous politics, which "apparently negated and excluded" her (1993, p. 57). She explained that perhaps because she was a woman and the issues of gender and inequality were very important to her, she could understand other forms of inequality. Perhaps something akin to that is true of me, but still, it took living in the US and answering many questions about Bolivia to allow me to take another step outside of the framework I was familiar with and begin to see with different eyes.

Existing inequalities are magnified by the implicit "I do the research and you are the subject". It is partly for this reason that I find myself powerfully drawn to Linda Smith's grilling of researchers who attempt to perform cross-cultural research. I have felt particularly aware of the issues she raises because I have done research that in many cases challenged my own assumptions and habitus. Therefore, I considered it useful to respond to the challenges that she has expressed.

Framing research in cross-cultural contexts

These are some reflections surrounding the nine questions that Linda Smith considers need to be asked in “cross-cultural contexts” to frame the key issues (1999, p. 173).

“Who defined the research topic?” I have defined the topic and scope of the research because I was interested in exploring an experience in community building, in gaining a better understanding of it, and writing about it for my Master’s thesis. I was also very interested in disseminating this experience to interested parties in Bolivia and abroad. I was aware that the CAUP had recently embarked on the planning of two projects: a photographic registry of its trajectory and current activities and a website. The CAUP has also planned to write up its own history, with descriptions and interviews. These efforts are both to systematize their own experience for the members and make it known to non-members. Therefore, the alternate view provided by this research could prove useful to the CAUP and to other interested parties, as a contrast and complement to the research the members themselves are planning to do.

“For whom is this study worthy and relevant? Who says so?” As to this question, I hope that an “outsider’s perspective”, a critical perception of CAUP’s process will be relevant for the CAUP itself, which is in a period of opening up to the world, diffusing information about its work and compiling materials about its history and present work. As part of this effort, I will translate this thesis to Spanish for Spanish readers.

I believe that this study can also be relevant to those in Bolivia, and in other countries, who are interested in learning about the construction of community with

traditional cultural tools. This case study has the potential to be relevant to researchers interested in social movements, identity, and agency, as a contribution to the existing knowledge about identity based grassroots movements.

Lastly, this study may be relevant to activists and strategic supporters interested in the complexities of working with identity based grassroots organizations. As to *“who says whether this study is worthy and relevant”*, the preceding assumptions about the relevance of this research are all mine, except for the first one: As I mentioned above, CAUP members told me that because this research came from *“an outsider’s perspective”*, it could be useful to them at this time.

“What knowledge will the community gain from this study?” Through this research, CAUP members might achieve insights as to how they could be perceived and portrayed by an outside observer. The CAUP community and researchers interested in issues of representation and *“otherness”* might find it useful to interrogate issues of why some aspects of the CAUP’s work were privileged over others, why their experience was *“framed”* in theory and how it could have been done otherwise and why this thesis was organized the way it was.

“What knowledge will the researcher gain from this study?” I have learned a great deal from the CAUP and about its cultural proposal, subalternity and agency, social movements and communities. I have become more knowledgeable about Aymara and urban Aymara culture including how some CAUP members live their lives in Pampajasi and what they say about hardship and *suma qamaña* (in Aymara, the good life) in

Pampajasi. Also, throughout the research process, I have learned about the “unpacking of the invisible knapsack” of white privilege (McIntosh, 1990.)

“What are some likely positive outcomes?” The outcome of this research will be a physical document, a Master’s Thesis, that can be read in English by English speaking researchers and upon its translation to Spanish, by Spanish speaking researchers who are interested in identity-based grassroots organizations, in issues of subalternity, agency and activism and may contribute to their knowledge of these topics.

This research may be of use to planners and development organizations that are interested in learning about identity based grassroots organizations and who have long wondered why so many development projects fail or work less well than they had hoped or predicted.

Another is that this research may provide insights to grassroots organizations that have their own agenda of cultural revitalization and who are interested in how their own cultural tools can be used towards their empowerment. An important positive outcome is the hope that this research can be of use to CAUP members and CAUP’s own researchers and activists. This research can be of use to grassroots CAUP team members who feel curiosity as to one more way in which their experience can be viewed. It may also be useful to the CAUP teenagers who have been curious or have questioned the cultural framework of the CAUP and are interested in seeing how this cultural project is seen by others. This thesis or parts of it may invite them to interrogate this cultural framework for themselves, agree with it, propose changes, or contest it. This research may serve as a reference for the CAUP as an organization to see itself reflected in the mirror of the

“other”, to contest these views and to use them to modify or confirm their practices, or for whatever use they see fit.

I believe that this research may be of least use to the oldest grassroots members of the CAUP, the oldest awichas, who at this point, know whether what they are doing works for them or not. Likewise, the younger children of the CAUP will not read this thesis and will not know if their lives can really benefit from knowing what it contains. It is possible that both awichas and children may benefit indirectly from future grant proposals that the CAUP members write, with some reference to these research materials.

“What are some possible negative outcomes?” Knowledge can be used by the CAUP to interrogate their current practices and strengthen their organization, but also to undermine and weaken it. The sharing of information and perspectives, particularly in written form, allows the issues covered to gain visibility and be discussed by members and non-members. As an outsider commented, “so much of the CAUP’s work is subjective”. That is true, but when efforts are made to write it all down and “pin down” the whys and hows, their work is more open to scrutiny. Among the possible negative outcomes is that the CAUP members might resent how they are presented, or how some of the issues and perspectives appear in the text. They might also resent that certain elements were left out, or how much some individual members were quoted. These written materials can also be used by outsiders to perform negative criticisms of the CAUP’s work.

“How can the negative outcomes be eliminated?” Negative outcomes cannot be completely eliminated, particularly because as with all knowledge, the potential benefits

of disclosure are laced with risks and uncertainty as to how the organization itself may use these materials and how non-members may use them. Those who have no interest in this kind of process or research will not read about it, but these materials will be accessible to those who have interest in learning from them, contributing to these debates, or becoming involved in negative criticism. Negative outcomes can be reduced if the researcher mentions the author of each observation and statement or conversely, in some cases omits the author. Also, negative outcomes can be reduced if some of the CAUP members check the research materials before they are formalized, so that inconsistencies can be corrected and provocative statements can be tempered. Negative outcomes resulting from inaccurate portrayals or from skewed perspectives, approaches and interpretations, can and should be re-directed to the researcher, to me, because I am the author of this portrayal of a complex reality and a complex organization.

"To whom is the researcher accountable?" In the first place, I feel accountable to the people of the CAUP. One way to satisfy this accountability and to verify accuracy is by "the telling of events in public in the presence of those who also know" (Calliou, 2004, p. 78). In this case, the reading and/or oral recounting of this thesis "in the presence of those who know" will be an opportunity for contestation or validation. I also feel accountable to my professors at the University of Oregon who have taught me to be thorough, organized, and to include many voices. The corrections and the defense of this thesis will satisfy this accountability.

"What processes are in place to support the research, the researched and the researcher?" The CAUP members agreed to participate in this research and will

hopefully support the results, or at least the intention and the joint effort behind the results. The CAUP will receive a translated copy of this research, to be used for whatever purposes their work may require.

Secondly, this research was performed in compliance to the requirements of the Human Subjects Committee of the University of Oregon, whose goal is to make sure that the research was performed ethically and in a way that justified the effort and the inconveniences to the individuals and groups that participated in the research. The research process and the writing process is the responsibility of the researcher, but is overseen by the appointed Thesis Committee.

Third, this research has been performed to contribute to the understanding of the cultural proposal of the CAUP and there is no direct, practical correlation between this research and the implementation of a project that may be contingent upon these results.

Fourth, the diffusion of these materials may contribute to establish an environment of better inter-cultural understanding between CAUP members and non-members who have read this thesis. Also, a friendship and a bond have developed between us, the participants in this research and the researcher, which will hopefully continue and be the basis for more collaborative work to be done in the future.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

Before embarking on the research itself, I knew little about the CAUP except that they were a group of Aymara women who were self-managing, which was unusual within the framework of social projects undertaken in Bolivia at the time, by NGOs and government agencies. Therefore at first, the purpose of this research was to explore the cultural basis of the work of the grassroots organization CAUP, the Community of Urban Aymaras of Pampajasi in La Paz, Bolivia, and specifically to examine the ways in which the CAUP combined its cultural roots and its cultural mission, and how their relative longevity could be explained.

However, as the research progressed, it became important to learn more about how the women of the CAUP used elements of the ayllu-community to organize, how their being women had affected the outcome, and what roles strategic supporters and activists had played. Interviews, focus groups, and conversations revealed the difficult circumstances and conditions that the first groups of the CAUP had faced upon their migration to La Paz and the path that their own initiatives for self-sufficiency had taken, based on rural ayllu-community values and with the strategic support of volunteers, donors and two social community psychologists.

The CAUP, a community based on a rural habitus

The habitus of the rural Andean ayllu-community was brought to the city by the individual rural migrant members of what would later become the CAUP. The first members were women, rural born or that had strong ties to the countryside. This was the basis upon which the first group of women of the future CAUP organized and what made their community different from other urban organizations in the city at that time (the 1980s), which were mostly charity-based or religious and social organizations and local and foreign NGOs. It was not common for the indigenous actors themselves to organize in the city using their own cultural tools. Despite the strong influence of the rural Aymara habitus upon the city and the fact that it permeated most of the urban manual labor-, factory- and union environments of La Paz, it was unusual that this rural habitus be formally instituted as the main organizing factor, around which other organizational factors would coalesce.

The CAUP community based its work openly on the rural Andean community habitus and then filled in the cracks with some administrative methods that they developed along the way and which helped them keep track of their finances and expand and connect with other urban and rural organizations. The indigenous habitus embodied a world vision in which being Aymara made sense again. It was a familiar and practical way of doing things that provided a framework, a symbolic and administrative grid for their organization. In the beginning, CAUP members said, they were afraid that what they were doing was wrong; they even thought it might be illegal to try to organize without the

sponsorship of an NGO. At the same time, however, it felt comfortable, so they pursued their intuitions.

During the months I was there and observed this community in operation, I saw how the sum of these cultural elements and management techniques seemed to resolve many practical aspects of urban community living and make of the CAUP a functioning urban Aymara ayllu-community. Members shared and consistently practiced common ayllu-community values which included equality, respect, participation, solidarity, reciprocity, and work; they also used the same social tools as the ayllu-communities in the rural areas, such as decision making and conflict resolution through the assembly, yearly rotating leadership, social vigilance, and transparency and accountability.

It is significant that these urban Aymara women and men generated most of their funds and self-managed them and that they maintained their stated value of autonomy in financial decision making. The members of the CAUP strengthened their community through the use of the Aymara language, rituals, traditional music and dance, the ritual and social use of coca and the conserving of their community memories, resulting in what many individuals have reported as an increased sense of identity, security, and pride. The men and women of the CAUP reported that the results of their collective work had been satisfying in the following ways: providing some solutions for their practical needs, providing emotional support and a sense of belonging, well-being and dignity for the members, and receiving acknowledgement from other individuals and groups.

The values, practices and apparent satisfaction with the results obtained had so far allowed the organization to be sustainable through time, and also have been flexible

enough for the members to continue to adapt to the demands of city life and to pursue their projects. The present time of transition for the organization will continue to test their capacities to adapt to Bolivian society as urban Aymaras and confirm or disprove if this identity based grassroots organization continues to serve their needs.

Agency

The creation of an urban grassroots organization based on the rural Andean community was a political statement in itself, which ran counter to the developmentalist philosophy that guided the efforts made by local and transnational NGOs and the national government in Bolivia in the 1980s. This act and the continued existence of the CAUP through time, demonstrated that indigenous women could organize without the tutelage of an NGO or a church, based on elements of the rural ayllu-community and could modify those elements according to their needs and to the demands of survival in the city.

Through the practice of their ayllu-community habitus, the CAUP women found a way to resolve some of their pressing needs and at the same time resist the pressure to reject their Aymara heritage. They became a collective and slowly rediscovered their sense of individual and group agency. The ayllu-community format was familiar and comfortable and constituted not only a discourse or rhetoric, but a daily practice. The constitution of a social identity is an act of agency and more so the construction of an alternative and form of social identity. Therefore, the day-to-day construction of the group identity of the CAUP community has been an ongoing opportunity to practice agency and empowerment.

The group that would later become the CAUP, composed of the women who had recently migrated with their families from the countryside to the city, began to organize based on the need to respond to the practical necessities of city life. Many of them had sought help individually from NGOs and churches in the past and received some health services, some educational support for their children, and occasional work cobbling streets and digging ditches. But when these women began getting together on Saturday afternoons to discuss their common problems and the possibilities of joint action to find solutions, they saw that the group itself offered comfort and solidarity among members and that they could meet many of their needs through the mechanisms of community. They didn't speak of the empowerment of women explicitly then, and don't speak of it now. However, to an outside observer, gender relations are different within the CAUP than in urban Aymara society in general, and than in the countryside. These Aymara women used the rural Andean tools of community to organize and added the administrative elements that each stage of their development required. These elements helped the group come together, acquire a group identity and strengthen it, and continue to work together for the past 25 years.

The group began to achieve practical results, such as their first contacts with local and foreign donor organizations, the steady accumulation of savings, and later the building of the first meeting rooms and living quarters for the awichas, which confirmed to them that they were on a good track. More people joined the groups, and new groups and new activities were planned. Some groups only lasted for a year or two; others survived and have evolved together with the changing needs of the groups, such as the

Qulla Uta, which is the Center for Healing and Spirituality, the Machaq Uta, which is the daycare and the urban and now also rural Awicha groups of senior citizens. The total CAUP membership is almost 500 people and their activities are mostly self funded. The total amount of the funding they currently receive is about \$20,000 yearly, from various sources, mostly private.

The manifestations of agency perceived in the current CAUP community include the construction and maintenance of a social and cultural identity as an urban community, self-management, the sense of pride and ownership of the CAUP members, and particularly in the city, the greater participation and initiative on the part of the women of the organization.

Urban administrative systems such as simple bookkeeping have helped bridge the gaps between rural and urban administration, while continuing to practice ayllu-community values and customs such as equality among members; reciprocity, a system of rotating leadership; decision making and problem solving through consensus; and direct consultation in assemblies, which also enhance members' sense of agency. They have generated joint savings and have decision making power over their own money, including communicating directly with funding sources and with commercial counterparts. CAUP members speak the Aymara language, practice Aymara spirituality, rituals and medicine, and they chew coca leaves socially, dance, sing and play traditional Aymara music, as well as generate cultural events, all of which helps them preserve a sense of ayllu-community values and Aymara culture.

Agency is also demonstrated in the fact that even the oldest members of the Awicha groups can explain what their community does and how it works to visitors or new groups, and that their work continues despite funding crises and the fact that their two main local advocates and strategic supporters have now partially retired. The women volunteer to explain how their organization came to be and how it operates and tell visitors with pride, “we have no boss, we are all bosses here”. CAUP has membership in local networks and participates in cultural events as a community; it is an accepted and respected part of the neighborhood and has become increasingly known locally and abroad. The invitations received by the CAUP to teach every day throughout the regular school year, for three consecutive years so far, about indigenous cultures in a local middle school as well as the invitations that CAUP members have received to speak publicly about their organization, give workshops and consult with other grassroots organizations and with the Ministry of Health of the Bolivian government, are all a testimony to the increased agency of the members of this organization.

Strategic support

The process of agency and empowerment that began with the enactment of the rural habitus of community in the city and that now continues through the day to day recreation of community through the agency and choice of its members, has been strategically supported by many volunteers and donors locally and from abroad. Their support has been strategic because it was adapted to the needs of the community and imposed few or no conditions, which allowed the CAUP community to be flexible and

practice agency within the changing economic, social, and political conditions of the country. This support has been loosely based on reciprocity and personal relationships, in which CAUP members can see themselves returning favors with services, good wishes, hospitality, friendship, or the promise to return the favor in some way at a later date. This has allowed a more horizontal relationship to build between givers and receivers, with a potential for greater equality and face-to-face accountability.

Two among these strategic supporters, the social community psychologists Javier Mendoza and Mercedes Zerda, have provided support to the community because they were accepted as members, and because they believed and continue to believe that a self-managed urban Aymara community is possible. This nondirective support allowed members to find their own voices and agency. Their help was strategic in that it took different forms according to the needs of the moment: they helped the community locate potential funding sources; accompanied them physically to city administrative offices when needed and then stood back to let them present their case; and perhaps most importantly, they did not dictate any solutions. As was said previously, the first groups of Aymara women who requested their help said that the translation of the word “psychologist” and the role of Javier and Mercedes, would be “*qananchiri*”, or “person who lights the way”. “Lighting the way”, “translating”, and in general maintaining a low profile, were also briefly discussed in Chapter Seven. These attitudes are very different from the paternalism and the role of leadership that so many non-indigenous political and ideological leaders have assumed in Bolivia since it became a nation, and contrary to the

role of leftist intellectuals, who considered it was their responsibility to teach and guide oppressed peoples.

The CAUP Team also operates within a framework of nondirectiveness. It was formalized about six years ago to coordinate the increasingly complex activities of the CAUP community. It is composed of young urban Aymara people, men and women, who support but do not “represent” or speak for the members of the CAUP community. The strategic support of the CAUP Team can be thought of as the continuation and diversification of the function of “people who light the way”, rather than of direction, decision making or oversight. The strategic support of the local and foreign volunteers and private funders would be that of friends who practice redistribution and allow the community of CAUP to receive and give back, with dignity. This type of strategic support honors the sense of agency and autonomy that has been the focus of the CAUP organization.

Agency through being and through doing

While the CAUP’s sustainability through time is, in itself, a testimony to its success in keeping the community alive and growing, the reason for its coming into existence was a need for change. There was a need to do something new, to create a space where urban Aymaras could not only “be”, but also from which they could “do”; in other words, a need to have meaningful agency. The change needed was for Aymara values to be acknowledged and respected in Bolivian society and for urban Aymaras to be acknowledged as Aymaras, contrary to what had been the norm since they were

conquered, oppressed, and then negated, excluded, and made invisible through national laws and non-indigenous hegemonies and practices.

The day-to-day existence of CAUP as an ayllu-community is important because it demonstrates that not only cultural survival and resistance are possible, but also that the construction of change, of a viable cultural alternative to mainstream, “developmentalist”, models is possible, and that women can make it happen. To promote change, the CAUP has made elements of the traditional ayllu-community operative in the city. Therefore, it was important not only to anchor their group identity and maintain the “self-sameness” of their community, but also to remain flexible and responsive to the changes of its members and of society.

The women and men of the CAUP construct change through the everyday practices of community and their organization is also subject to the changes in society. The organizing experience that started out based on habitus, became consciousness, then began to be reinforced in the daily practice of the CAUP, and has finally diffused outside of the CAUP community.

To be able to move towards change and continue to be a community that provides services to its members, the urban Aymara women and men of the CAUP came together through a common habitus of ayllu-community to find meaning and comfort where “everything belonged to them” and where they could live according to their own rules and values. The forces of reciprocity were at work to keep up the dynamics of community and provide a sense of well-being to the members, as they understood it and as they themselves could reproduce, every day.

The children were raised feeling comfortable with how they looked and acted, good about themselves and about their mothers and fathers and grandparents, in what they believed, and how they spoke. Their individual identities could be forged in coherence within a collective identity and although they would still receive discriminatory treatment and they would continue to be excluded within mainstream Bolivian society, they would be stronger to be able to withstand it and always have a community to come back to.

From an early age the children of Machaq Uta have been taught by the caretaking mothers, and later by the tíos how to belong to a group of human beings with mutual respect. The multi-generational character of the CAUP keeps feedback flowing between different generational groups, helps this ayllu-community retain self-sameness, reinforces a sense of personal identity and belonging, and at the same time allows the groups to adapt to the times and to outside influences.

To be able to create and maintain their community and their autonomy, the CAUP has had to be as financially self-sufficient as possible, and seek or accept only funding that would allow them to self-manage, organize, and allocate their resources according to their own priorities. This autonomy has come at a cost because they barely have enough to maintain their organization and not quite enough to start new enterprises for the time being. However, the women and the men feel ownership, they are proud of their trajectory, their resourcefulness and their independence. They have retained their “conscience and decision making power” as Don Mario of Qulla Uta said in his interview,

and have demonstrated that alternative forms of organization based on the Aymara culture and initiated by women, are an empowering option in the city.

Social movements and grassroots organizations like the CAUP, that use elements of indigenous culture to mobilize, allow their members to portray themselves as they choose to be seen. As has been shown in chapter VI, the transition from the countryside to the city and then to membership in an urban ayllu-community has allowed a shift to take place in members' lives, from isolation to full participation in a community and to identities based on agency and empowerment. The women of the CAUP groups, particularly those of the urban groups, can exercise more full participation and initiative within their community. Together with other women, their spouses, young sons and daughters, and parents, they provide support for each other and have constructed an urban community in the city. The Awichas are no longer "orphaned" in the city, they belong to a community again, where they can live together, eat together and share their last days in a safe environment. Qulla Uta is there to provide health care in a way that is respectful to their beliefs and traditions, and the CAUP Team is there to reinforce the connections between the CAUP components and between the urban and the rural groups.

The dominant criollo or "white" sectors of society that for so many years have contributed to the construction of subalternized indigenous identities in Bolivia are now confronted by alternate ways to live and to think. Alternate proposals such as that of the CAUP contribute to change the foundations of Bolivia's post-colonialist society.

APPENDICES

All of the materials included in these appendices are notes jotted down in the moment and later transcribed into “journals” or brief excerpts of interviews. They have not been edited for style. I hope that the explanations provided in this thesis and the materials contained in these appendices contribute to illuminate each other.

APPENDIX A
TRANSCRIPTION OF UNEDITED JOURNAL NOTES
FROM FOUR AWICHA MEETINGS

These four transcriptions illustrate the dynamic between the members of the Awicha groups and the interventions of the CAUP Team members. Number four contains details about the history of one of the oldest Awicha groups.

Meeting No. 1

I walked about a block down from where I had gotten off the bus, knocked on a small black metal door that was ajar and entered. A young girl who was combing her long black hair as she sat on some steep cement steps said, "Go right ahead."

I entered a short tunnel under those steps into an open cemented patio and saw a room on the left that had a door and a window towards the patio. As I had seen others do, I quietly shook hands with everybody and took a seat while Mari [of the CAUP Team] continued addressing the group in Aymara.

They were all apparently addressing the cook issue, talking about Doña Angélica and Doña Cristina and how they would divide their time cooking for the group. Doña Angélica would cook for them October and November and Doña Cristina, August and September. I counted those present: seventeen women, one man. Another man, Don Noel,

arrived later. I caught some names: Doña Emeteria, Doña Juana, Doña Ana. Then the lady who wears glasses, Doña Flora?, then Doña Simona, Doña Neftalí, Doña Catalina and the man's name is Don Salcedo.

The group was in uproar. After a while Marisol [from the CAUP Team] talked to the group in Aymara, saying, remember, you taught Cristina how to cook, remember how she used to cook? All her soups were all white bone, white bone...you taught her to cook (and Mari mentioned several dishes). She used to cook "*menudencia*" (heart, tripe, etc.) a lot, too, remember? Mari asked. And now you taught her how to cook what you like. She's gotten better. Now, you taught her how to cook, you taught her how to keep track of the dry foods, how to save up the propane gas, but you haven't yet taught her how to keep things clean. Be patient with her. You can teach her cleanliness. The women grumbled, talked among themselves, acquiesced. Almost all of this was in Aymara and then she'd translate in Spanish, add a few other things.

Then the group talked about the *anticrético* they've been holding for almost two years, now (a system through which you pay a sum, say 2,000 Bolivian pesos for two rooms and then you're allowed to live in them. The owners use the money as capital for business. When you leave, your money is returned to you with no interest. It is usually a one year contract, extendable on agreement, to a second year). Some names were mentioned, Susana, Ana, who apparently were State authorities that the group President had approached, seeking the donation of a piece of property upon which they could build a house for themselves as other groups had done. They also mentioned Patricia V., from the City office, and how many times she had tried on their behalf to get the city to donate

property. Don Noel, the president, who had just walked in, said that September, after the August holidays, was a good time to continue pushing. Their anticrético would still be good until March of the following year. Then the group started saying, yes, moves are hard on us...hard on the old people...*ser viejita, grave es* (it's tough to be old)...then they'd say, "We just have to get a piece of property, whatever it takes."

On the table, a meter and a half table by maybe 80 cms., there were two vases with flowers: one with fresh flowers, one with plastic roses. Also, a few papers, a green plastic bucket with boiled apple juice and a ladle in it, a few notebooks, and a giant cup - the cup that the Awichas group had won when they got second place at the *entrada* (parade with traditional dancing), dancing *mohoseños* (traditional dance). This giant cup was proof they had done it - it was orange and chrome, with eagles and crowns with leaves on them. A Bolivian flag ribbon and another green and yellow ribbon fluttered from the top knob that had another eagle on it.

They really talk things over in the groups. And the men and women just speak out, they name names, but as I see it, they keep the aggression level down. They state the matter and say, for example, as the glasses lady said, "I don't want Doña Angélica to leave. She's a good cook, we should keep her. Doña Cristina burns the food." Things like that. Straightforward, no indirect talk.

A little later, the group was a little sad, talking about what being old is like. A very old woman whose name I didn't catch said: "My daughter, she throws me out. My other daughter, I can stay at her house, but only if I sit by the door, like a *chullpa* (an Aymara body in a burial site, crouched in a fetal position), so I don't take up any space."

She cried a little. "That's why I like to come here." Many others told their stories of poverty and solitude. And then Doña Marcela said, "Well, *yo soy de tener* (literally, I am a having kind)...so you can throw me out, if you like!" And the others said jokingly, yeah, sure, you're a *carnicera*, (a butcher), you're a *terrateniente* (a landowner), you have plenty of money! Then she said, "But like yesterday. It was a holiday. And it was my birthday. There I was, *solita* (alone, my little self), lying on my bed, *mi coquita me masco* (I chew my little coca), I turn on my radio...I am so lonesome I want to hug the radio (the group laughed). I just listen to the news. But it's over quickly. I come here because here we laugh, we eat, we get mad at each other...In the house, *silencio nomás* (it's all silence)... Here, people murmur about me, people complain about me, people bless me...that's a blessing. *Alegre he pasado aquí* (I have spent my time happily here).

I remembered that a few days before, when a Swedish volunteer was visiting another of the Awicha groups, the awichas asked her how senior citizens lived in Sweden. When the volunteer was done with her description, which included State provided doctor's visits, independent housing and a lot of privacy, there was a moment of silence. "I wouldn't like it there," said one awicha and many others agreed.

Meeting No. 2

I picked Peti [Mercedes Zerda, social community psychologist and long time supporter of the CAUP groups] up and we walked to yet another location, where another group of awichas live – this group has existed for 16-18 years? - although the building itself is more recent. This is a building on a street corner, with a wall that curves around

on the outside and which is painted light blue-green, called "The Green House". There is a fruit vendor right there on the corner. The sun hits there all morning and the awichas had a cement bench built along that wall, to sun themselves. And there they were, about 7 of them. Another group of 3 or 4 was across the street, sitting on the curb where the vendor sits. We said our hellos, shaking hands, kissing and chatting with each person and walked in. The entrance is very narrow, between two rooms and a cement staircase that goes upstairs, but then turns left into a patio that is approximately twelve meters by seven, all cement. Small rooms all face the patio. Each woman, man or couple, has a room there. And at the back of the cemented patio, is a larger room they use for meetings. It is maybe ten by five meters. A large building at the far right has obstructed the awicha's sun: Now they only have sun in their little patio for a few hours at midday, or else they have to go sun themselves outside the building.

The people that had been seated outside sunning themselves had very warm hands and ours were cold. The "bride" (an awicha who had married a man from the Awicha groups) we had met the day before, at the bus stop, whispered mischievously into Peti's ear that her warm hands meant she was warm all over, hot, and that's why her husband loved her so much. (A Team member had mentioned actually "the bride" was shrewish and got impatient with her husband's deafness and that the very first night they were married they argued over the bed covers and over who would sleep on which side.)

There were approximately 25 people present, after about an hour. People talk things over "accumulatively": What one person says is repeated by the next person, who adds some reflections on it. What they are going to dance is a decision made by mulling

over different considerations which are offered up by different people. "We have already danced *Chunchu* (a traditional dance) for two years," says one. "And one should always dance everything for three years. We could get sick, otherwise." Javicho, the music teacher, says, "Yes, but remember that when you started, you only danced things that were not fashionable. Like the *Wakatintis* (another traditional dance) you danced that year." And he reminded them that they had planned on dancing *Chunchus* for the entire year and they did: for celebrations, presentations, their own festivity... maybe that was why many were ready to move on. He reminded them that when they danced *Chunchus*, nobody else did and now, it had become fashionable. They did have some of the costumes, that was true...but they also had some polleras for the *mohoseñada* (a third traditional dance). And they knew folks that would rent more polleras for 5 pesos each because they knew them. Music was talked about and several people offered to look into it. Javicho knew some musicians, but it was a large group, 45 people, and that would mean more transportation money and more expense. Then the group discussed if they also wanted a mass and a *diana*, which I think is a mass at daybreak, and a party. Javicho said it was important to know how much money they could spend and the group asked Peti what she thought. She explained that because of the difference between the dollar and the pound, they actually had a margin of money that could be used for these expenses. AND they had the \$100 that every year, that the remaining "Swedish awicha" had sent, for the party. The awichas discussed what they would eat - jokingly said maybe a mouse "*sajta*" (traditional dish with chicken). Many old folks would repeat in a loud voice, what had been said, into the ears of those that were deaf, so they could laugh and enjoy the

conversation too, wrapping their arms around their necks and pulling their heads towards them. They also hugged and hugged very affectionately, when they met. There was a little scuffle between Doña Matiasa and "the bride", who had touched her shoulder in passing. Doña Matiasa whirled around and said something like, "don't touch me"! And then when the arguing started, the whole group burst out, "we're in a meeting, please"! And it all stopped dead, except for one man who added something else and "the bride" said, "and you stay out of this!" That was the end. The talk went on as if nothing had happened.

When Marisol and Roxana walked into the meeting, the tone changed a little. While Aymara was still spoken, there was a little more Spanish going on. Marisol asked direct questions, joked around a little, but now the group more clearly sought a consensus. After a while, Marisol said, "I can see that you want *mohoseños* so that's what it'll be, is everybody ok with that?" Then each person was asked their opinion, one by one. When they remained silent or just shook their heads, they were encouraged by the others to speak up, to say what they thought.

There were 6 men and 19 women in the meeting. Very few are bent over. One woman however, who is a yatiri herself, I think, is very old, is bent almost double. She and her husband are in charge of the storeroom. She moves very slowly and hardly spoke during the meeting. The sheepskins were again distributed, as more people arrived and there weren't enough benches to sit on and the cement floor is so cold. Little cliques formed on the floor, for example, around Doña Cristina. The awichas in her group had been waiting for her so they could make the decisions on the dancing and she arrived late.

Some are *cristianos* (belong to Christian sects) and can't dance or drink alcohol. The others playfully said, that's ok, they'll cook. They will also bring *cervecita* (a little beer) for the participants in the parade to drink. And they'll drink *bicervecina*, which is a dark ale that has little or no alcoholic content. They laughed. One of them was called Don Juan and he sat next to me.

Later in the meeting a white haired woman came in through the very narrow doorway, with her walker, made of welded metal tubes. She was neatly dressed in a pollera and shawl and had white shoes, I noticed, like moccasins, which is unusual in La Paz. I later heard she was from Apolo, which is in the north of the Department of La Paz. Everyone was neat and tidy with the exception of Doña Matiasa, whose smile was charming, so you sort of forgot about the tidiness thing. Everyone wore *polleras* and *mantas* (shawls) and hats or caps and thinner, women-like stockings. Almost everyone wore shoes except for one man, ("the groom"), who wore thick sandals and dark socks.

Meeting No. 3

Doña Irma told me that she and her husband lived in Argentina for 30 years, then visited Brazil around 20 days, then visited Montevideo. She cried when she talked about how poor she was now, about her wealthy family members in Calacoto (in the South of La Paz), about how her daughter had recently said, "mom, let's not go visit them. They never come to see you. What would we go there for..." Doña Irma understands Aymara and speaks some, too, cannot read and write, but clearly wants me to know that she has had different life experiences than most of the awichas in her Awicha group.

Two young girls from the Psychology Department of the state university work with the older folks, but left because there were too few of them and because they figured folks would want to practice the dance. They are in their mid twenties, probably, and do physical and mental exercises with them on Tuesdays. They said they'd be back "in August".

Javicho set up a big radio and cassette player, an ancient one, and the men and women practiced in the long cement patio: two men and five women. One, Doña Cristina, danced with abandon. The rest, carefully, thoughtfully. Javicho patiently stood next to each of them as the music played and demonstrated, gently, time after time, what the steps were. If they picked up on them, he'd coach them some more. If not, he'd leave them alone. The music is shrill and repetitive, almost like a mantra, repeats and repeats. One line of women and one line of two men danced parallel to each other, advancing towards the main entrance and doubling back. They practiced for about an hour.

Then Javicho left and Marisol arrived. People seemed very comfortable with her. She asked about several issues they had, beginning with the dance. There will be a mass at 12:00 in the church in Pampajasi, then folks will eat and then they will dance. Doña Cristina and Doña Simona are the organizers for this year. They chuckled when they told the others that they'd ask the priest for a good price for saying the mass and they would probably get it because they were awichas.

Folks spoke mostly in Aymara with Marisol and she with them. (I think not so much with Javicho). Between 3:00 and 4:00 there will be another rehearsal at the

Daycare center, Machaq Uta. Then, at 8:00, the young folks will practice the same dances, but with far more fancy steps.

One woman spun light brown wool as the meeting continued. At this point there were about eight people present and half were sitting on the cement floor on sheepskins, with their backs towards the sun. (They were talking about potatoes and mentioned one I didn't know, a *papa dulce*, a potato that is sweeter than most and grows in the area of Pacajes, close to the town of Nazacara).

Some of the women's names are Doña Aurelia, Doña Maria (who spun), Doña Cristina, Doña Marcelina and the men were Don Segundino and Don Juan.

I'll just briefly mention some terms I wrote down in my notebook: The Consejo de Venerables Ancianos (the Council of Venerable Senior Citizens). This group has been participating for 11-12 years. Now the leader has changed, his name is Antonio R. He is not retired. J.C. represents the Awichas in that council and Doña Mery and another old gentleman. There are 22 groups of senior citizens in this association. Five more groups come from El Alto and also participate. Each month each group pays five pesos as their due to the Council. A large milk can with a paper scotch taped around it was brought out and they took out five pesos and wrote it down on the paper, as an expense, out of their group savings, and handed it to their group president.

Discussions continued on who would dance, why and why not. And what those who don't dance will do to help.

Doña Marcela tells me that these old folks make *kispiñas* (little quinoa treats) to support themselves. They sell in the market. They haven't been making *kispiñas* for a

while. The women were saying, "We must apologize to our customers." They have little quinoa flour left. They talked about prices. They agreed that Doña María will buy more quinoa. It costs 35 pesos for 25 pounds, which is called an *arroba*. Four *arrobas* are a *quintal*. 140 pesos for a *quintal*. One lady said, let's make the *kispiñas*, that way we won't have to wash clothes to earn money, or work in anything else. We can make *peske* (a porridge like preparation with quinoa), too. We can sell the *kispiñas* in the schools.

This house was originally the Daycare, this was their building. Doña Marcelina (she is very shortsighted: she looks at things very close up, but doesn't wear any glasses) was there from the beginning. She tells me that Warminakax Saranti was the name of the original women's group where it all started. Javicho (the music professor who is in charge of all the music programs) learned from Gitte (a Swedish volunteer) how to play and read music. Javicho says that he wanted to go out and play with the other kids and usually, Gitte would stop him. "No, not you, you will stay and learn." The group, Doña Marcelina says, wanted to rely on their Aymara values, teach people not to be ashamed of their Aymara heritage. To show kids that there was more to life than *irse a lo facil* (just live an easy life), a life of friends, the internet, parties, she said.

Right now there are six people living in what appear to be twelve rooms. Nothing is needed to belong to the group. People who are interested just need to come and meet the *awichas*, come to their meetings and gain their acceptance. Then, bring their ID card and hear from the others what they will have to do if they decide to join.

They do have to support themselves, though. They knit, they make *kispiñas* and do odd jobs to support the group. Marisol helps them keep track of the *kispiña* making

and the knitting. She asks a woman for her wool and she brings it out together with a scale. They weigh it and it is given to another woman who will knit with it. These shawls are sent to a dealer in Sweden and another in England, who sell them (apparently they don't sell much, just a few items). Doña Irma shows another member, who wants to knit, how to do it.

The meeting ends. Marisol and I say goodbye and we walk out. Mari also studies Anthropology at the University of San Andrés. She is one of three in the CAUP Team that are university students. I think that their university exposure shows very little here. Perhaps they talk about this in their classes? We talk a little about her family, about her studies.

Meeting No. 4

I arrived in Pampajasi a little late, at close to 11:00 and Mari (from the CAUP Team) was there. The members of the group were reporting on the latest events: Some had gone to a meeting for senior citizens at the *Casa de la Cultura*, downtown. There had been a formal act and several speakers and the audience was informed on the progress made to approve a law for senior citizens. Doña Machi did the reporting. She is the oldest member of this group.

Eleven people were present, including three men. Mari then asked how much quinoa flour had been bought and if they were going to bake and sell *kispiñas* at the market. Since no one wanted to volunteer to sell that week, they decided to postpone the

baking and selling for one week. They only sell weekends. Sales are too low during the week to justify the effort.

Don Juan excused himself, ran off to make a call to the propane company because he had bought a propane canister that was empty and he was demanding an exchange. The young men in the truck wouldn't do it, so he was calling the factory. He identified himself and the group and the factory people had said, "Tomorrow or the day after, make sure you're around to hear the bell, we'll exchange it." People half kidded him and half chided him for not realizing it wasn't as heavy as it should be. A group member said, "I once bought one that had water in it. It was heavy, but there was no propane in it."

Then they talked about cooking and whose turn it was. It is Don Juan's turn and he has decided that each day he will cook a different Aymara dish. *Wathía, peske, willkaparu* and other dishes. Don Segundino said, "I'll get myself a good helper when it's my turn." They all laughed. He probably doesn't cook much.

Then we ate. I just accepted a little food, because I had come unannounced. It was *ají de fideo*, very tasty: noodles with ground beef and a lot of "juice".

Doña Flora is new. She has been waiting three years for a room, she says. She wants to live here and no longer has enough money for an anticrético. She used to pay 400 bolivianos anticrético for a room. Mari said, "Do you have family? They must come here, so we can explain the conditions to all of you. Here you have no formal medical care and there is no daily food service." Mari said, "they must understand that if you get sick, we will call your family to notify them and so they can take care of you." Doña Flora said she had a nephew that would come.

Mari finished eating and said goodbye. She had classes at the University. (That morning she'd been teaching at the Copacabana School and after her class at the university, she had a meeting with the financing agencies, "Las Golondrinas" (the Swallows, from Sweden). That night, after the meeting ended at 7:30, she came to my house and we talked about a paper for a class of hers, until 11:30 p.m. She called her husband, who she hoped was not going to be furious, at about 10:30. And she said, "and tomorrow's going to be the same: we have our meeting with the CAUP group..."). A few months before, Mari got mugged one night when she was going to the hospital to see her sister and her new baby. She was not hurt, but she was very shaken up.

Mari left and the men took out their instruments and started playing. Don Mariano, "the groom", played the mandolin and Don Juan and Don Segundino played *charangos* (small stringed instruments with 12 strings). Two of the women, Doña Maria and Doña Cristina, who are the leaders of the group that year, came and invited me to dance. They sang while they whirled this way and that: we danced holding hands. The other women clapped. We danced about three songs until we were totally out of breath: actually I was out of breath, they were in much better shape than I. The atmosphere was very relaxed. The group was expecting Javicho, who then called saying he couldn't make it. Beforehand, I had talked to Doña Maria and Doña Cristina and we agreed that if Javicho couldn't come, they'd sit with me and tell me about their group.

After the dancing and a few photos (they requested them - the musicians, the women and Doña Aurelia asked for a picture of herself with a little chick on her shoulder), we walked into the large, long meeting room and sat on the benches, on a chair,

on a little stool and on a sort of truck seat, propped up against a wall. The group started small, but as we spoke, more people wandered in.

I asked why this group is called "Central". Doña Machi said, "Because this was the first place we had. This was the first *Guardería* (Daycare), where the *Wiñatyatakis* got together. (*Wiñayataki* means "forever" in Aymara and it was the name of the group of daycare children who formed a theater and music group that was well known in the neighborhood). Fermina, Juana, Cisca, Julia, were the founding members, she said. This property was bought around 1982, from Doña Juana Huanca. At the time, the property had two little rooms at the back and one big one. The three little rooms in the front did not exist then. The kitchen existed and also the room across from it.

They received financing from a group called "the Camp..." Doña Machi fumbled with the word, I think it is *los Canadienses* (the Canadians)...and with it, they built the remaining three rooms, which were finished in 1998. Half the little patio was cemented, half was just dirt. "There is a plaque outside," she said, "that commemorates the funders that contributed with money to build the three rooms and take out the division between two tiny existing rooms."

The property was originally a car repair garage with a tin roof, they said. Doña Marcelina said, "I've been living here 25, 26 years, now". She moved in and lived there alone. Apparently Javicho (Javier Chipana, the music teacher) was orphaned when he was 12, his sister at the age of eight or nine and another little sister at about six and Doña Machi, Marcelina, raised them for two-three years, she thinks. She lived there by herself for about a year, she said. Then she worked at the daycare for about 2 years, caring for all

the kids. She had four children of her own and her kids were there at the daycare. She worked for 18 years for the daycare and caring for the "Central" property. And she says, "I didn't get a cent for it, because this is not a government effort, its private. I did get my room, I have a roof over my head, though, and I am grateful for that."

Doña Machi says the house had no running water until recently. They've just had running water for the last two years. For years they carried water there from the Green House, or Doña Machi got water from her godmother, who lived close by: by the bucket, or with a hose, watching out not to be caught. Yes, there was a public water faucet, every few blocks, but you had to pay for the water. They stored water in barrels, when it rained and ran off the roofs and that helped a little.

Doña Machi said that at one point in those early years there were rumors that some people had been saying, "Let's sell this and share the money." She thought she had overheard that and cried. "Where will I go is this is sold"? she had said. "What about my four children? I have nowhere else to go." But then the funders had said no, this house should be kept and used as a house for the awichas. So then Don Juan, mostly, and others, started the long job of registering the house in the Awichas' name, until the paperwork was finally finished.

Don Juanito had been a member of the group "down below" for three years. They got together first every Thursday, then every Friday. But he started coming to the Friday meetings too and couldn't handle both days and also have the time to attend his religious duties: Apparently his church gets together several times a week and the preacher was very strict about their attendance. (Some of the women kidded him - "I'd never go to that

church. The preacher is so strict." Don Juanito smiled a little and lowered his head.) The other women who were seated in a circle, telling me the story of their group, started telling me how long they'd been part of the group. Doña Cris, three, four years. The others nodded, yes. Doña Maria, around nine. She'd been a member of a different group before she joined this group. She did that, she said, because of the *habladurias* (the gossip). She left the first group and for a year she returned to the countryside, planted crops, made *chuño* (dehydrated potatoes). She was away for about a year.

This group existed, the 6 people seated there agreed, thanks to Don Juanito and other women, who *andaban* (were active) trying to get it going. Those other women who helped get the group going were Doña Machi, Doña Encarna, then Doña Cristina, Doña Aurelia. Doña Machi and Doña Encarna were part of the board, then, said Doña Machi. The group decided to do without their weekly meal to save money to buy sand and cement. The Mayor's office helped with cement, but they still needed more: they needed stones, too, and they also needed to pay the construction people. They finished cementing their patio four or five years ago.

In 1999, Don Juan said, that phase of the construction was finished, the cement floors in the rooms were *vaciados* ("done") and it was a good thing that the constructor guy was *un conocido* (someone they knew, implying he was trustworthy). They also worked on the bathroom, installed a tank to store water above the bathroom (the group bought the tank), and then seven doors were replaced. The tin on the roofs was old and leaked and some of the tin sheets were replaced, two or three at first, then others. Doña Machi was the first person who lived there, then Don Juan, then Doña Aurelia.

As to their activities, they cook and eat together on Tuesdays. That same day, Javicho visits and also the two young women who teach them physical exercises. Doña Machi said that she didn't like them that much, that she preferred Jan, the Swedish volunteer who first taught them. Jan had left Don Juan in charge of heading the exercises and taught him how to lead the group. (Apparently Don Juan did this job devotedly, even traveling to the countryside to visit the rural groups, until his health failed. He seems very healthy now, but frail. He is bent almost double now). They exercise sometimes and have even played volleyball occasionally, the group said.

They bake kispifias (small pinched quinoa bread or cookies), to sell on Sundays. They bake on Saturdays and sell the next day, or at daybreak Sunday. Usually the main bakers are Don Juanito, Doña Aurelia and Doña Cristina. Many didn't know how before they entered the group, but they learned from the others.

Mari has written some of their names down, so they can eventually have their eyes checked. Many don't see well. Doña Irma, for example, wants to learn how to spin, but doesn't see well enough to do it. She knits, though. I received an explanation of how to make kispifias, but I got lost somewhere along the line. The quinoa is bought and washed, I heard, then ground and then I think some oil is added. Then it has to be kneaded like bread, with some water and some salt. Something like that. Then little balls are made and they are pinched and then cooked in a pot, on straw, in the vapor of the boiling water underneath the straw.

Three people in the group spin, including Don Juan, Doña Cristina and Doña Aurelia. Three knit, Doña Cristina, Doña Julia?, and someone whose name I didn't catch.

Don Juan, turns out, is a jack of all trades, in his modest, quiet way. He knows how to weave on a loom, he knows how to make ropes with wool and still makes *hondas* (knit woolen slings to hurl stones).

Doña Machi says she stays in the group because she likes it and because she has a room there. She is from the Pulacayo mine, Potosí. She likes the companionship.

Don Juan says that he enjoys chatting, talking about their lives. They laugh, he says and they fight, too. I think Don Juan is from Santiago de Machaca.

Doña Julia used to fight a lot, they said, and after warning her many times, the group decided she should be banished from the group. She was gone for two years, then she came back.

Doña Maria, I think, is also from Santiago de Machaca. She said her sister was a member of the group and was very sick for three years, so she, Doña Maria, took food to her house every day. Then Doña Ramona started saying, “you should come to the group yourself, not just to get food for your sister.” Doña Maria has no children herself, just an *ahijadita* (a godchild).

Doña Cristina said she was an orphan. She has no idea where her brothers and sisters might be. She grew up in Chulumani (in the Yungas region). She had no documents, no ID. Doña Machi helped her do the paperwork to get a birth certificate and ID. Doña Machi’s *comadre* (maybe the lady is the godmother to one of Doña Machi’s children, or vice versa) kept telling Doña Cristina to join the group. Doña Cristina is always ready to help (the group nodded). However, she said, sometimes people “get mad”, or *se atajan* (stop you from doing something). She is always volunteering, anyway.

That's her way, she says. She now receives *bonosol*, a yearly sum for the elderly [about \$200.-] from the government, she said.

Doña Irma joined the group because she lived alone, in a little room, on 11th street. Peti (Mercedes Zerda) and Marisol Surculento invited her to join, she says. She came to visit, she liked the group and saw that her things would fit in the room. Her landlady's son was always getting drunk. One morning he came home drunk and bawled her out, something about his dogs. Doña Irma then said, "good riddance, I'm leaving today." She's been part of the group for three years and is very happy. She says, though, "Sometimes I feel people here don't like me much."

Doña Flora has been visiting the group for three years. She says she likes the group because they are good company ("*es para distraerse*", she says), to make friends and talk. She wants to knit for the group. She says you can no longer get a room, in anticrético, for 400 Bolivian pesos.

Doña Aurelia has been part of the group for four years. She had been part of the group "down below" for seven years before that. There was no room available down there. Her daughter lives in that neighborhood. She lived with her daughter for two years. An aunt of hers lived in the Awicha house. She's part of this group because there was a room for her here and she doesn't have money to rent elsewhere.

Don Juan and three others had also belonged to the group "down below". But then he decided to invest 380 Bolivian pesos (just under \$50) of his own money to remodel a room that used to be the old bathroom, for himself, on this property,. He had worked in construction in his youth and knew how. The money was all returned to him by the group,

plus payment for his handiwork. He bought wood for the ceiling, stucco for the walls, tin for the roof and did the work himself. He's been living in that room for six years now.

I wrote down some other names, which I think were also part of the group and have now died: Doña Teresa, another Doña Cristina, Doña Encarna, Doña Rita. At one point, there were 24 members in the group. Right now there are 4 vacant rooms. The rooms are small, according to some, too small, about 2.5 by 2.5 meters. Doña Flora says that she might have to rent a little storeroom. She asked around, if anybody knew of one available, close by. She limps and walks with a stick. She had a hip operation. Before that, she worked hard, she says. Now, she hasn't worked for 16 years. She used to knit sweaters, to order. Now, she says, there's no money in it, nobody orders knitted sweaters any more.

APPENDIX B
TRANSCRIPTION OF NOTES TAKEN ABOUT
MACHAQ UTA, THE DAYCARE

The notes about Machaq Uta meeting help give an idea of what they are like: the participations, the arguing, the way conflicts are aired out in public; how the daycare is managed through weekly meetings of the Board and the parents; the public accounting of the expenses and the weekly descriptions of the activities undertaken with the different age groups of children.

In Machaq Uta, the Daycare, it's bustling all day. While only two of the five Awicha groups actually have houses in which some of them live day in and day out, Machaq Uta is the "home" where no one sleeps, but where everyone hangs out. The massive, white, extremely functional building has two large black metal gates at the entrance, which are only closed near midnight, when the last stragglers – who stayed late after a meeting, or stayed to finish a project on the one and only updated computer CAUP has – are leaving. The gates are always open and the small cemented patio is always full of children of all ages. Tuesday nights the moms get together, starting at about 8:00 and ending at between 10:45 p.m. and midnight, according to the matters at hand. This is a partial description of one of their meetings.

Javicho and Doña Bea and Doña Silvia (all *tíos*, or caretakers) and the Machaq Uta Board members which are all Machaq Uta mothers, went downstairs after their own meeting and maybe 16 or 17 men and women, older and younger were there already, a few kids poked their head in once in a while. About ten more scurried in while the meeting was in session, hurriedly greeted the *Directiva* (Board) and those present and sat down. The *directiva* is composed of four people: a president, a secretary, a treasurer and a person who is in charge of the oven, where bread is baked every week and outsiders can bake bread and pay a small sum for the use of the oven. (I believe the price is one peso per baking sheet.)

This was a huge classroom type room, maybe 15 meters by 12, with wooden benches along the walls and three long tables. The lighting is not very bright.

On the opposite end from which we walked in, there were three women seated. One of them, maybe in her 50s, heavyset, was peeling potatoes. A bundled up baby slept soundly on another bench, across from them.

The temperature was freezing cold, but no one seemed cold, no one fidgeted. Both doors, on either end of the room, remained open during the meeting. Many women, as upstairs, knitted. All of the women and the men were heavily bundled up: most of the women with sweaters and shawls, some with a jacket. Most of the men wore thick, padded jackets, with the collars rolled up. Many wore caps: baseball caps the men, knitted caps the women. The woman who peeled potatoes wore a bowler hat. The conversation was animated, but orderly. About eight people made reports from their specific areas, the *tíos* (uncles, aunts, the name the children give their caretakers), the

cook, the *directiva*. Mostly, people didn't look in their direction, but they were quiet and listened. One of the tíos, Nolberto, and the potato peeling woman, the cook, had read from their notebooks exactly what they had bought from the market to cook that week. Each item, how many, and the price. Everyone listened and made comments: "there is a cheaper soap to wash the dishes with than the one you're using," etc. There were, though, several arguments between the women and there was even name calling, but in a "respectful" way. The rest just listened. After a while, one or another people present would gently interject – "hey, don't disrespect each other!" Or, "let's get on with the next point of discussion!" The main argument was between a young woman and an older one, both of whom were seated on the left hand side as you entered the door, where the *directivas* were sitting. She complained to an older woman who was part of the Board that the dry goods didn't seem enough to do the cooking and she didn't want to be blamed for that. Both women addressed each other "respectfully", but there was a definite edge. The younger addressed the older woman saying, "I'm surprised that an older *señora* such as yourself would lie like that. You clearly said, here are the three bags of groceries, it should be enough"; to which the other adjoined, "I never said that! That's a lie"!, etc. Several witnesses were called upon to verify who said what and how it all took place and after a while an agreement was reached. Then, the moms and a few dads that were present requested to go on to the next topics. One mom said to the cook, "When my son asks you to not serve him too much, disregard that, he needs the food. I don't give my kids any dinner at night." And the moms talked among themselves about that for a while. Then another mom whose daughter lost her hat on the Friday outing wanted to

know who was going to pay him back for the hat. The group discussed who saw the hat last and they agreed to ask a mom who was not present then if she had it. Then another mom said that when her daughter took bread to the Daycare in her backpack, she should be made to eat it: They really made the tías very responsible for their kids, for their clean hands, for their full bellies. (One man was receiving money from people, throughout and writing it all down.) At that meeting I learned that tío Nolberto, besides being in charge of the big kids, up to 18, helping them with their homework, and training them in soccer and organizing tournaments, helps organize the pantry. He gives the cooks the “dry” supplies. The tías showed off the handiwork of the kids for that past week and read the programs, what they did each day of the week and what they would do the following. The moms listened and continued knitting, occasionally asking a question or two. Another long discussion took place about a 10 liter plastic container that one of the *tias* had borrowed from someone else, to take Kool-aid and had been lost on their previous Friday outing. There were suggestions from several people and everybody helped track down who last saw the container. The last issue was intense! There is a white dog next door that snarls and snaps when families pass by the house to drop the children off. The dog had apparently bitten a few people the previous days and after talking about it, Doña Silvia, one of the tías, got up right then and went next door to invite the neighbor family to the meeting, so that the matter would be discussed, and to hear what they had to say. Doña Silvia brought back the message: they said, no thanks, they couldn’t come then, but they’d be there the next day. The folks in the meeting agreed to write a letter of protest and sign it, so it’d be ready for the next day.

In an interview with Doña Elsa, who was Board member and was cooking in March 2007 when I interviewed her, she told me that every day the children eat soup and then a *segundo*, or second dish, which is not soup. The meals are tasty and the cooks very frugal: they cook lunch for 75 people with 20 *pesos bolivianos* worth of vegetables a day, a little over \$2, some *secos*, or “dry supplies” like rice or noodles and with 2 pounds of beef. Beef is less expensive than chicken.

APPENDIX C
TRANSCRIPTION OF NOTES AND PARTS OF INTERVIEWS TAKEN
ABOUT QULLA UTA

Qulla Uta is the traditional healing center. It is small but it accomplishes an important function, for the CAUP membership and for the community. It also provides two yatiris and the qulliri with a meager income. Its sole existence is a testimony of the persistence of ritual and herbal healing in the Aymara tradition. The second part of this appendix contains a description of Don Antonio, the new yatiri, of the work he does and in the last part there is a brief description of a healing session done by the qulliri to a woman complaining of a bad cough.

As I passed by the Qulla Uta, with its rusted sign, Doña Ramona, dark and slender, was sitting in the sun and knitting on the street in front of the store. She is an awicha and she lives in the Green House. She opens the Qulla Uta in the morning and closes between 6:00 and 7:00. She said that Don Mario was off to cure a little girl and that sometimes people came to the Qulla Uta to be cured and that at other times Don Mario would go see patients. I peered into the Qulla Uta store and it was small and dark, with a few paper *serpentin*as (fancy, colored paper strips) adorning the low ceiling, criss-crossed and tacked to each corner. Going down two cement steps into the store, there was a little counter with a few *mesas* (ritual preparations) on top of it and a cupboard behind, with a

few other items for ritual healing that I couldn't quite see. Doña Ramona confirmed that Wednesday the Qulla Uta meetings take place, with Don Mario, the yatiri, Don Antonio, the new yatiri, Primi, the linguist, Javier, psychologist and Doña Vicky, the qulliri. Doña Vicky visited the Awicha groups every week and checked on their general health. Both Don Mario and Doña Vicky are CAUP members.

Doña Ramona was very touched by Peti's (Peti is Mercedes Zerda's nickname) father's recent death the past month of July. She said, "and we didn't know... there we were, dancing!" She shook her head. She again said how much all the groups were indebted to Peti. "Where would we be, on the streets, if it weren't for her..."

Doña Sabina, with her white hair in two thick braids and her big smile, walked by, chatted briefly with us and walked on.

The following is part of an interview with Doña Vicky, the qulliri and Don Antonio, the yatiri:

Elena: Can you tell me about this mesa [offering]?

Antonio: This is an offering for *Pachamama* [in Aymara, Mother Earth]. I will burn it. These strands of wool are llama wool. This is like preparing a meal for the spirits.

Doña Vicky, speaking for Don Antonio, who speaks little Spanish: It is important to include copal (an incense-type resin) and incense. There must be wine and alcohol. This *mesa* is to thank Pachamama and also so there are no accidents, to

have good crops. There are other kinds of mesas, like *Chiar Mesa* (Black Mesa), which is done with other herbs, for bad spirits.

Elena: So here people come to have different mesas done?

Doña Vicky (speaking for herself): Yes and here they also read in coca to see what your luck is like. And if you move to another house and all that, you can have that worked on her because you can't always burn (offerings) in some people's houses. The landlords might not like it. Here you will sometimes see the *braseros* (iron or ceramic burners) going and that's what they're for, for people who have just moved and want to burn an offering.

Elena: And what kinds of healing do you do here?

Doña Vicky: The healing I do is for rheumatism, for cramps, coughs. Don Mario does his secret ritual healings and Don Antonio reads in coca and also heals and does massage.

Don Antonio: Sometimes people come because they have been *agarrados del rayo* (caught by lightning), or they are sick. I read the coca leaves and cure people according to that.

Vicky (continuing for Don Antonio): When water has been left out, *agua serenada*, until dawn, sometimes you get an illness that is called *kurmi*. That also happens when you leave your home without first eating. In both cases you have to put a bit of food, even a little bit of salt, in your mouth. People come here mostly to *hacerse ver su suerte* (to have their fortune told), or if something was lost or if there has been a theft.

Elena: When lightening has fallen upon a person, what do you do?

Vicky: People who have had lightening fall on them come to make an offering of a *mesa* and that person may be destined to be an *Amauta* (wise man) or a *yatiri* (healer). If you are born feet first, you have a special destiny, it is called *Kalilla*. Those who have *buena estrella* (a good star) are those who have been born and chosen to heal. They may have a special sign like a cleft palate or six fingers...”

The interview continued for a few more minutes and afterwards I saw, with permission of the client, a healing take place: a small, frail looking woman wearing a *pollera* (traditional skirt) and bowler hat came in because she had a bad cough. She was not asked to take off any of her clothes, but she removed her hat and set it beside her. We were sitting in one of the two small rooms at the back of the store. She was asked about her symptoms by Vicky, then examined, her pulses taken, her blood pressure taken also and then shaken softly a few times with her arms crossed over her face and told to take *wira-wira* tea and to put newspaper on her chest and her back. She was told not to eat toasted corn nor papaya nor cheese and to drink warm orange juice. She was asked to return that evening to have *una vaporización* (a process involving the inhalation of boiling medicinal compounds).

At Qulla Uta, Doña Ramona told us, they sell small vials of wine, alcohol, candles, some plants for coughs, for kidney illnesses, for excessive bleeding, afterbirth complications: they also sell ritual materials for mesas, incense, molasses, some herbs like *wacataya* and *amor seco*; also cow bile and *ph'asa* (a white mineral powder). And

she added that people also come here to call back their child's *ajayu*, soul, after a bad scare or an illness.

When asked who comes to Qulla Uta, Primi, who has been translating from Aymara to Spanish the book of Don Mario about Aymara cosmovision, said:

“Mostly poor people, *de pollera* [who wear traditional skirts], or also *de vestido* [Western clothes], who still believe in the power of coca and all that. Because Don Mario is well known, people from “la Zona Sur” (the southern, wealthier part of the city) also come. The awichas come, too. Each day a few people come in to be cured and more, to buy supplies. In August there is more clientele [August is the month for house blessings] and Don Antonio goes to many houses to bless them. But Qulla Uta is open every day. Don Antonio does everything a yatiri does. I wouldn't want Qulla Uta to change, but sometimes we need a little more money so it can expand a little. Qulla Uta's only income is from the herbs and ritual things that Doña Ramona sells...”

APPENDIX D

DESCRIPTION OF THE 2006 *ENTRADA* IN PAMPAJASI

Every year on July 25th the festivities of Santiago take place in Pampajasi. He is their patron saint. In most neighborhoods around the city similar festivities and parades take place on their own saint's day. Rural towns also celebrate this way and urban residents travel back to their own hometowns to participate. There were more than thirty participating groups in the 2006 big Entrada or parade. Each group has its own band and dances a traditional Andean dance they choose for that year. It is a tradition that groups dance the same dance for three years before changing. The CAUP has been participating for several years and Javier Chipana, the music teacher, mentioned that their CAUP group is the only one that is multi-generational and that the spectators and the Entrada judges value that. Members of all three groups practice for weeks before the parade. Specific dance steps change from year to year.

The previous day, I had a bad cold. Mica, my youngest daughter, accompanied me on a long search in the uptown commercial neighborhoods of La Paz, looking for a black hat. No black hats! Now, I know that last week was the *Convite de la Entrada Universitaria*, which is a party held the week before the University of San Andres' *Entrada*. This coming Saturday will be the *Entrada Universitaria*, an exciting dancing parade which will come down the Prado, the main street of downtown La Paz from way

uptown. All of those youngsters needed clothes and some buy, some rent. So maybe that explained the hat shortage. Finally, after asking a bunch of people, I ended up buying a black hat with a yellow feather at Tarapacá Street, for 35 pesos (a little less than four dollars).

I punctured another little hole in my sandals so they would be tighter on my feet and so avoid blisters. I put on my white long sleeved blouse and my black pants, then my brother Alvaro's thick *faja* (*colorful woven belt or sash*), which was much prettier than mine. (I took mine there anyway and ended up lending it to Marisol, who had none, so it worked out fine). Doña Marina bought me some pretty flowers, which included two big sunflowers. I was going to dance as a man in the Awicha sector of the *mohoseñada* (traditional Andean music played on reed instruments instead of by a big band) because there was a shortage of men who wanted to dance.

Daniela, my eldest daughter, accompanied us up to Pampajasi and we picked up an awayo with thick intensely colored *polleras* from the Daycare. An awayo is a large, colorful woven square, to carry children or objects on your back. A little girl from the Machaq Uta, the Daycare, came with us, also called Mari. She was maybe 10 years old. She was our guide. We wouldn't have found the place without her.

We walked in and there weren't many people there, they hadn't yet come back from the mass. Doña Cris was still wearing her sweats and her tennis shoes. I asked "When will you change your clothes"? and she said, "When I'm through serving everybody their food." A beautiful three year old girl with a black hat like mine, Nicole, was walking around, and turned out to be Doña Cris' granddaughter. Very tall, taller than

my grandson Joaquin, who is four. I want to buy Joaco and my nephew Chino a hat like that...

The men and women started arriving. Very dressed up, chattering, very excited. Almost everybody was dressed up. The men didn't seem to be so excited, for the most part, and sat outside, on the far end of the patio, on the left. After a while, white plastic was set down on the cemented patio floor and woolen *taris* (small colorful woolen squares), where *chuño* (dehydrated potatoes), potatoes and a good strong *llajwa* (spicy sauce) were laid out and people chatted and ate. This is called *aptapi*. It's a meal where each brings in some food and everyone shares. Other people brought in a bottle of soda. Some women walked around with a tiny glass, inviting each of us a little bit of soda, in the same glass.

Then more people arrived. It was all color and excitement. The organizers arrived, and Doña Simona looking a little pale. She continued offering the soda and then the food was distributed: a delicious chicken soup with vegetables and a whole potato in it. Daniela was still there because Doña Cris asked us to wait: Many people hadn't changed yet and the idea was that Daniela and the little girl go back down to the daycare, taking people's ordinary street clothes down with them in the same awayo they brought with them, so that when the *Entrada* was over, they could change back into their own clothes. Daniela shared her soup with Mari, who ate her half up hungrily.

People were eating, dressing up, fixing each other's clothes up, arranging flowers on their backs, lending each other sashes and hats and combing their hair. The entire place was filled with people, maybe 70 to 100 people, including young kids who were

also going to dance. Javicho arrived, briefly, looking worried and said the musicians hadn't shown up yet. He looked a little mad, too. He said, "Have everybody meet up where the *Entrada* starts. We're the second group and it's late." At that point, it was about 1:30 already. So I started doing that and Daniela and Mari left with the bundles of clothes they'd received until then.

Marisol arrived, all pink-cheeked and dressed up in a *pollera* (traditional skirt). I had heard that she has many polleras and sometimes thinks of wearing a pollera for everyday, but doesn't do it because of the bulk. I can see why. Women walk with a side to side movement which helps the polleras move and look graceful, but they are big and heavy.

We started out, ran back to pick up what we'd forgotten. I walked back another time to give a latecomer awicha who showed up in her own shiny pollera, one from the batch we'd brought. Another awicha changed right there on the street.

It was all a bustle up there at the top of the hill, maybe five blocks from the Awicha house. Apparently the church is nearby, too, but you could hardly see for the people milling around, the colors, the outfits, the nylon stockings, the piled up hair and tiny skirts of the *figuras* (main, showy dancers), the giant carapace type shells of the *Morenos* (of the *Morenada*, dance representing the black slaves of Colonial times), the swirling of the *api* (which is a hot drink made of maiz, of a dark pink color) colored shawls of the *cholitas* (name generally used to describe younger indigenous or *mestizo* women wearing traditional dress, thick skirts, bowler hats, shawls) dancing with the *Morenos*. They were the first group, before us. Some of the women were older, some

younger. They moved slowly and looked self-assured. Many wore makeup. They wore enormous gold and pearl earrings, rings with stones, gold *topos* (pins to hold their mantas or shawls together) and even had jewels and gold chains on their hats. ("It's the fashion now, of these *ricachas*" [wealthy women] sniffed Doña Sabina, in our group). They wore nylons, too, but with a seam in the back and see-through shoes that looked like Cinderella slippers that made their feet look even tinier. They tittered and laughed, shared some beer, joked around with the men. They are part of the upcoming wealthy urban Aymara people in Pampajasi. The men didn't look half as good, although they were imposing in their own right. Their costumes were white and silver and they wore silver plated masks, which I had never seen before.

There was a rush and the *Morenos* all hurried to take their place. The little awichas with flowers on their backs looked tiny, frail and unfathomably rural, as they stood back to let the *Morenos* through.

The *Morenos'* band picked up and we were deafened by the trumpets, the tubas, the big drum and the lines and lines of smaller drums. The men donned their hundred pound shoulder pieces and masks and started swaying with the music. The women, in silver and *api* colors, swayed serenely in their places, left to right, right to left. They headed down the street and we let them get as far out of earshot as we could so the music from their band and our musicians wouldn't clash. Let them have their space.

At that point, our musicians had just arrived, about 25 of them, some young, some older. They wore mustard colored cardigans and each carried their reed instruments, *mohoseños* (reed instruments) of different sizes, and we took our places. The awichas

ended up with too many men! Many of the Awicha men had decided at the last moment, that they would dance after all, and there were too many of us, now. Marisol came back and plucked five of us from the line and led us ahead, to where the daycare Machaq Uta moms were. They had only Eric, who led the men's line, a handsome young man from the teens group and Don Mario, the *yatiri* (healer from Qulla Uta). So now, most of women had their counterpart. We started down the street and after a few blocks, I could feel my little toes scraping against the inside of the leather sandal. So when we stopped a little, I sat down on the sidewalk and taped the toes. That helped. More one toe than the other, but in the end, the dancing took care of any concerns about my toes. As we stopped each time for a few minutes and received a little juice and plenty of beer that really made a difference. I could care less about my dry nose and throat. I shared a few of my throat lozenges with Doña Cris who also dressed up as a man and then a cigarette with Don Mario and Don Carlos. Don Mario had been requesting beer and when we started having some, I could see what a big difference it made. We became looser, the music sounded louder and more enticing, we danced more freely. We each had maybe eight small glasses throughout.

The awichas were all using thick woolen polleras that were dark green/fuchsia/bright blue/deep purple/red/ or orange-red. They wore white long sleeved blouses or sweaters: several of them were quite fancy. One awicha wore an old fashioned cholita blouse of a thick silk material, gathered at the waist and with many pleats. Almost all wore black derby hats and the front rim was bent down, as I have more often seen in the rural areas. They wore sandals on their feet, most of them, and a colorful awayo,

folded on a diagonal and crossed over the left shoulder and tied in the front over the chest. In the awayo was a bunch of fresh flowers. Some women wore a little jewelry, almost always earrings. The men also used the awayo, black hats, sandals, black pants, and a white shirt.

A lot of people had watched the Entrada on the streets. Some sat on the curb, some sat on little benches or chairs. They laughed, pointed, yelled encouraging words. There were lots of kids. The people dancing pretty much represented the population of Pampajasi - between the extremes of the Morenos and the Awichas.

We went down, down, down, past the lines of people who were watching. Many enjoyed the Awichas and our very enthusiastic Daycare moms group, who danced with all their might, red *polleras* swirling. We, the add-on men, had to learn the three steps as we went. When Eddy, the Machaq Uta teen, waved his hand showing us one forefinger and signaled with several short blasts from his whistle, it was so we'd get ready. Then, another short blast and the step began. They weren't too complex, but quite pleasing to the eye. Number one required less moving from the spot, two more moving, in this case taking three quick steps to the left and number three was hard. It included running forward three steps, then backward two and turning round, pausing and running forward and backward. Then, everybody fell back in step again. We, the add-on men, did our best to follow. We'd start strong, then fudge a little and then follow again.

Every stop we'd drink a little. Mari sent her sister off twice to buy more film for their camera. Vicky, dancing on a diagonal to me, was unrecognizable in a pollera. Her movements were graceful and she didn't seem to ever get tired. A guy from a radio

station approached her when we'd past the mid point and she talked to him about the CAUP. I could tell she was energized and happy. She danced with her one year old baby on her back part of the way, and then her sister carried him in her arms. Marisol's two girls danced, too, the fifteen year old and the nine year old. They looked like little daisies. We all rearranged each other's flowers that tended to fall over to one side. The awichas had been expected to drop out after passing the grandstand, but they kept on going until the end, all of them. One very old lady was the mother of one of the awichas! She was so bent over that I worried for her. Although she'd sometimes take a break and sit in the middle of the street, she went the entire distance.

At the way end, we were getting tired. It was close to 6:30. We saw the Morenos starting to break ranks, the women standing to the sides, the men starting to take off their heavy costumes, so we walked around them and just kept on going, past the official end of the route, towards the Daycare Center. We continued dancing and dancing for several blocks until we got there. Our musicians were actually excellent: They played and played, no complaints, kept up the rhythm, accompanied us all the way.

We entered the Daycare Center and the music continued. White plastic chairs were brought out and some people sat on them, others on the cement steps. The organizers and the Machaq Uta children rushed around providing people with food. And that's where a little glitch occurred. The women in the kitchen served the dishes, which were deep, oval, plastic containers. They served and served. And some people still hadn't received their food. The cooks started to freak out: They knew exactly how many servings they needed and there wasn't going to be enough food. Turns out, they were

saying in the kitchen, that some of the awichas had probably received their food, then hidden it away, and received a second dish. ("*Son unas bandidas!*" [They are so tricky], someone laughed). No way to prove this...just that more than 100 dishes were served and there were only about 75 of us present to eat. I helped serve in the kitchen, but after I while I stopped: I could tell it was their very strategic choice to see who got the half plantain, who got the bigger or smaller piece of roasted chicken. There were visitors from outside Pampajasi that day, from other Awicha groups, and they needed to be taken care of. That was the meal, finely chopped up lettuce, tomato, onion, three roasted potatoes (then two), a whole roasted plantain, some *llajwa* (spicy sauce) and a large portion of roasted chicken. It is important for people to feel they have enough to eat on a special occasion. They have big industrial ovens in that kitchen for the baking of the bread. That kitchen is bare for anything else except one table, besides the ovens. Now, the women sat behind giant pots that contained each item of food and dished everything out from the floor, with their hands. The kids were served, I was surprised to see, as much as the adults. "*Pobres wawitas*" (poor babies), the women said, "They're hungry." The kids got their food in a plastic bag. Everybody ate with their fingers.

The cooks, Vicky, Marisol and a few "insiders" ate their food in the kitchen, when all the distributing was over, while the music boomed outside and people danced and danced, as if they hadn't just danced down the mountain for five hours that afternoon. The party broke up after midnight.

REFERENCES

- Albó, X. (1995). *Bolivia plurilingue*. La Paz, Bolivia: CIPCA/UNICEF.
- Albó, X. (2000). Bolivia: From Indian and campesino leaders to councilors and parliamentary deputies. In R. Sieder (Ed.), *Multiculturalism in Latin America* (pp. 74-102). Great Britain: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Albo, X. & Barnadas, J. M. (1990). *La cara india y campesina de nuestra historia*. La Paz, Bolivia: Unitas/CIPCA
- Albó, X., Greaves, T. & Sandoval, G. (1983). *Chukiyawu. La cara aymara de La Paz. III. Cabalgando entre dos mundos*. Bolivia: Wayar y Soux Impresores.
- Albó, X., Libermann, K., Godinez, A., & Pifarré, F. (1989). *Para comprender las culturas rurales en Bolivia*. La Paz, Bolivia: Offset Prisa Publicidad.
- Albro, R. (2006). The culture of democracy and Bolivia's indigenous movements. *Critique of Anthropology*, 26(4), 387-410.
- Albro, R. (2006). "The water is ours, carajo!" Deep citizenship in Bolivia's water war. In June Nash (Ed.), *Social Movements. An Anthropological Reader* (pp. 249-271). United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing.
- Alonso, A.M. (2004). Conforming disconformity: "Mestizaje", hybridity and the aesthetics of Mexican nationalism. *Cultural Anthropology*, 19(4), 459-490.
- Anderson, Benedict. (1994). Imagined communities. In J. Hutchinson, John & A. D. Smith (Eds.), *Nationalism* (pp. 89-96). Great Britain: Oxford University Press.
- Andolina, R. (2001, March). *Between local authenticity and global accountability: The Ayllu movement in contemporary Bolivia*. Paper prepared for workshop: "Beyond the lost decade: Indigenous movements and the transformation of development and democracy in Latin America". NJ: Princeton.
- Andolina, R., Radcliffe, S., Laurie, N. (2005, May). Development and culture: Transnational identity making in Bolivia. *Political Geography*, 24(6), 678-702.

- Antezana, L. (1986). Prologue. In Rivera, S. *Oprimidos pero no vencidos*. Switzerland: United Nations.
- Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands/La frontera. The new mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute books.
- Ari Chachaki, W. (2001). *Aruskipasipxanasataki: Para poder reflexionar*. Bolivia: hisbol.
- Arnold, D. & Spedding, A. (2005). *Mujeres en los movimientos sociales en Bolivia 2000 – 2003*. La Paz, Bolivia: CIDEM/ILCA.
- Arze, C. & Kruse, T. (2004, November/December). *The Consequences of neo-liberal reform*, in *Nacla Report on the Americas*, 38(3), 23-28.
- Barragán R. (1990). *Espacio urbano y dinámica étnica*. La Paz, Bolivia: Hisbol.
- Bartra, R. (1987). *La jaula de la melancolía. Identidad y metamorfosis del mexicano*. Mexico: Grijalbo.
- Beverley, J. (1999). *Subalternity and representation. Arguments in cultural theory*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Brass, T. (2000). Moral economists, subalterns, new social movements and the (re-) emergence of a (post-) modernized (middle) peasant. In V. Chaturvedi (Ed.), *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial* (pp. 127-162). London, GB: Verso.
- Brooker, P. (1999). *Cultural theory. A glossary*. UK: Oxford University Press.
- Brysk, A. (2000). *From tribal village to global village. Indian rights and international relations in Latin America*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1997). *Outline of a theory of practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Calliou, B. (2004). Methodology for recording oral histories in the aboriginal community *Native Studies Review* 15(1), 73-105.
- Carter, W. & Mamani, M. (1989). *Irpa Chico. Individuo y comunidad en la cultura Aymara*. 2nd Ed. La Paz, Bolivia, Editorial Juventud.
- CEPAL. *Participación, liderazgo y equidad de género en América Latina y el Caribe* (December, 1999). Retrieved February 25, 2007 from <http://www.eclac.org/publiaciones/Xml/3/4323/lcl1302e.pdf>

- CEPAL/UNIFEM. *Entender la pobreza desde la perspectiva de género* (January, 2004). No. 52, pp. 1-73. Retrieved January 29, 2007 from <http://222.oei.es/decada/portadas/Ic12063e.pdf>
- Choque Canqui, R. (1992). Historia. In H. van den Berg and N. Schiffers (Eds.), *La cosmovisión aymara* (pp. 59-77). La Paz, Bolivia: UCB/hisbol.
- Choque, M. E. & Mamani C. (2001). Reconstitución del ayllu y derechos de los pueblos indígenas: el movimiento indio de los Andes de Bolivia. *Journal of Latin American Anthropology*, 6(1), 202-222.
- Coca Museum. (n/d) Retrieved January 2, 2008 from <http://www.cocamuseum.com/main.html>
- Ciudad de El Alto. (n/d) Retrieved December 20, 2007 from <http://www.ciudadelalto.org.bo/elalto.html>
- CONAMAQ (Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu). (n/d) Retrieved December 22, 2007 from <http://www.conamaq.org.bo/sitio.shtml?apc=&s=e>
- Confederación Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia. (n/d). *Historia de los movimientos indígenas en Bolivia*. Retrieved January 3, 2008 at <http://www.puebloindio.org/CSUTCB3.html>
- Crabtree, J. (2007). Bolivia. In *South America, Central America and the Caribbean* (2008). 15th Ed. Europa Regional Surveys of the World (pp. 168-189). UK: Routledge.
- Creed, G. (2006). Reconsidering Community. In G. W. E. Creed, (Ed.), *The Seductions of Community. Emancipations, Oppressions, Quandaries* (pp. 3-22). Santa Fe: School of American Research.
- Das, V. (1997). La subalternidad como perspectiva. In Rivera, S. & Barragán, R. (Eds.), *Debates post coloniales: una introducción a los estudios de la subalternidad*. La Paz, Bolivia: historias.
- Enciclopedia de Bolivia (2006). Barcelona, Espana: Editorial Oceano.
- Fanon, F. (1994). On national culture. In P. Williams and L. Chrisman (Eds.), *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory. A Reader* (36-52). New York: Columbia University Press.

- Foweraker, J. (1995). *Theorizing social movements*. London: Pluto Press.
- Frow, J. (2005). Theory. In T. Bennet, L. Grossberg, & M. Morris. (Eds.), *New keywords. A revised vocabulary of culture and society*. UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- García, M.E. & Lucero, J. A. (2004). Un país sin indígenas?: Rethinking indigenous politics in Perú. In N. Grey Postero & L. Zamosc (Eds.), *The struggle for indigenous rights in Latin America*. (158-188). Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press.
- García Linera, A. (2000). Espacio social y estructuras simbólicas. Clase, dominación simbólica y etnicidad en la obra de Pierre Bourdieu. In H. Suárez, R. Gutiérrez, A. García, C. Benavente, F. Patzi, R. Prada. (Eds.) *Bourdieu. Leído desde el sur* (pp. 51-128). La Paz, Bolivia: Plural editores.
- García Linera, A., Chávez León, M., & Costas Monje, P. (2004). *Sociología de los movimientos sociales en Bolivia. Estructuras de movilización, repertorios culturales y acción política*. La Paz, Bolivia: Plural Editores.
- Gómez Balboa, M. E. (2006, March 16). *Del indigenismo al "Evismo"*. Retrieved April 18, 2006 from <http://ww.laprensa.com.bo/domingo/20060312/domingo1.htm>
- Good, P. (2006). *Between a rock and a hard place*. La Paz, Bolivia: Plural Editores.
- Gotkowitz, L. (2003). Revisiting the rural roots of the revolution. In M. S. Grindle & P. Domingo. (Eds.), *Proclaiming revolution. Bolivia in comparative perspective* (pp. 164-182). Great Britain: University of London & Harvard University
- Gray Molina, G. (2003). The Offspring of 1952: Poverty, exclusion and the promise of popular participation. In M.S. Grindle and P. Domingo (Eds.), *Proclaiming revolution. Bolivia in comparative perspective* (pp. 345-363). Great Britain: University of London & Harvard University.
- Gray Molina, G. (2005, January). *Ethnic politics in Bolivia: "Harmony of inequalities", 1900-2000*. Paper presented at the Third Forum for Human Development, Paris.
- Grindle, M. S. (2003). 1952 and all that: The Bolivian revolution in comparative perspective. In M. S. Grindle, & P. Domingo (Eds.). *Proclaiming revolution. Bolivia in comparative perspective* (pp. 1-24). Great Britain: University of London & Harvard University.
- Grossberg, L. (1996). Identity and cultural studies – Is that all there is? In S. Hall and P. du Gay, (Eds.), *Questions of cultural identity* (87-107). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Grossberg, L. (1996) History, politics and postmodernism. In D. Morley and C. Kuan-Hsing [Eds.], *Stuart Hall. Critical dialogues in cultural studies*. (pp. 151-173). London: Routledge.
- Guaygua, G, Riveros, A., & Quisbert, M. (December 1999/March 2000). Nuevas conductas sociales con raíces aymaras. *Ecografía de la juventud alteña. Tinkazos* 2(5), 59-73.
- Guja, R. (1997). Prefacio a los estudios de la subalternidad. In S. Rivera Cusicanqui & R. Barragán (Eds.), *Debates postcoloniales. Una introducción a los estudios de la subalternidad*, (p. 24). Bolivia: Editorial historias.
- Guzmán, V. (March, 1985.) Entrevista a un grupo de mujeres aymaras. *Chitakolla* newsletter No. 28, pp. 6-7.
- Hall, S. (1997). *Representation. Cultural representations and signifying practices*. London: Sage Publications.
- Healy, K. (2001). *Llamas, weavings and organic chocolate: multicultural grassroots development in the Andes and Amazon of Bolivia*. Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Hylton, F. & Thomson, S. (2004, November/December) Insurgent Bolivia, in *Nacla, Report on the Americas*, 38(3), 15-19.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística. (2002). *La Paz: Resultados departamentales. Censo nacional de población y vivienda 2001*. Bolivia: INE/UNFPA
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística. (2007, April 16) Archival annual census data for Pampajasi: 1976 and 1992, compiled and burned on CD by written request. La Paz, Bolivia: INE.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas de Bolivia. *Bolivia: Población total, por condición indígena y área de residencia, según departamento, censo 2001*. Retrieved November 10, 2007 at <http://www.ine.gov.bo/cgi-bin/piwdie1xx.exe/TIPO>
- Jenkins, R. (2002). *Pierre Bourdieu*. (2nd ed.). Great Britain: Routledge.
- Keck, M. E. and Sikkink, K. (1999, March). Transnational advocacy networks in international and regional politics. *International Social Science Journal*, 51(159) 89-101.

- Kendall, L. J. (2006). *From the liminal to the land: Building Amazon culture at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Maryland.
- Larson, B. (2004) *Trials of nation making. Liberalism, race and ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910*. United Kingdom: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.
- Laurie, N. Andolina, R., Radcliffe, S. (2000). The excluded "indigenous"? The implications of multi-ethnic policies for water reform in Bolivia. In R. Sieder (Ed.), *Multiculturalism in Latin America*. Institute of Latin American Studies Series. (pp. 252-276). Great Britain: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Mallon, F. E. (1994, December). The promise and dilemma of subaltern studies: Perspectives from Latin American history. *The American Historical Reviews*, 99(5), 1491-1515.
- McIntosh, P. (1990, Winter). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Independent School*, 49(2), 31-35.
- Medina, J. (2005). *Suma qamaña. Por una convivialidad post-industrial*. La Paz, Bolivia: Editorial Garza Azul.
- Melucci, A. (1996). *Challenging codes. Collective action in the information age*. Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- Mendoza, J. (1986, November). *Iskwila, sindikatu y kuartila*. Paper presented at the Conference on the Ayllu and the Union in the IV Encuentro de Estudios Bolivianos, Cochabamba, Bolivia.
- Mendoza, J. (2006). "*Dejando ser, a 4.000 Metros de Altura*". Unpublished manuscript.
- Mestizos, más que indígenas son una mayoría en Bolivia. 2007, July 1. *La Razón*, daily newspaper of La Paz. Retrieved July 30, 2007 from http://www.la-razon.com/versiones/20070701_005954/nota_276_447333.htm
- Montenegro, E. (1998). *Construcción de identidades e identidades tipo en la ciudad de La Paz*. Unpublished undergraduate thesis, Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, La Paz, Bolivia.
- Montero, M. (2004). *Introducción a la psicología comunitaria. Desarrollo, conceptos y procesos*. Argentina: Paidós.
- Montes R., F. (1999). *La máscara de piedra. Simbolismo y personalidad Aymaras en la historia*. La Paz, Bolivia: Editorial Armonía.

- Morley, D. (1996). EurAm, modernity, reason and alterity. In D. Moreley & K.H. Sing Chen (Eds.), *Stuart Hall. Critical dialogues in cultural studies*. London: Routledge.
- Muecke, S. (2006), Indigenous, in T. Bennet, L. Grossberg, M. Morris. (Eds.), *New keywords. A revised vocabulary of culture and society* (pp. 180-182). UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Nash, J. (2005). Introduction: Social movements and global processes. In J. Nash, Ed. *Social movements. An anthropological reader* (pp. 1-26). Ed. United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing.
- Nelson, D. (1999). *A finger in the wound: body politics in quincennial Guatemala*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Núñez, R. & Sweetser, E. (May, 2006). With the future behind them: Convergent evidence from Aymara language and gesture in the crosslinguistic comparison of spacial construals of time. *Cognitive Science*. (30)3, 401-450.
- Ortner, S. (1994). Theory in anthropology since the sixties. In N.B. Dirks, G. Eley, & S. B. Ortner (Eds.), *Culture, power, history. A reader in contemporary social theory* (pp. 372-411). Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Ortner, S. (2006). *Anthropology and social theory. Culture, power and the acting subject*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Ouweneel, A. (2003). The collapse of the Peruvian ayllu. In T. Salman & A. Zoomers (Eds.), *Imaging the Andes: Shifting margins of a marginal world* (pp. 81-98). 2003. Amsterdam: CEDLA/Aksant.
- Parenti, C. (2006, December 21). García Linera, the romantic radical. *Mother Jones*. Retrieved December 22, 2006 from http://www.motherjones.com/news/update/2006/12/garcia_linera.html.
- Pacheco, D. (1992). *El indianismo y los indios contemporaneos en Bolivia*. Bolivia: hisbol/musef.
- Patton, C. (2006). Movements. In T. Bennet, L. Grossberg & M. Morris (Eds.), *New keywords. A revised vocabulary of culture and society* (pp.224, 225). United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing.
- Patzi, F. (2008, February 25). *Qué es economía comunitaria?* Retrieved March 28, 2008 from http://www.larazon.com/Versiones/20080225_006193/c_246.htm

- Plant, R. (2000). Latin America's multiculturalism: economic and agrarian dimensions. In R. Sieder (Ed.), *Multiculturalism in Latin America*. United Kingdom: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Platt, T. (1987). Entre ch'axwa y muxsa. Para una historia del pensamiento político aymara. In T. Bouysse-Cassagne, O. Harris, T. Platt & V. Cereceda. (Eds.), *Tres reflexiones sobre el pensamiento andino* (pp. 61-122). La Paz, Bolivia: hisbol.
- Plata, W., Colque, G. & Calle, N. (2003). *Visiones de desarrollo en comunidades aymaras. Tradición y modernidad en tiempos de globalización*. Fundación PIEB. Bolivia
- Rappaport, J. (2005). *Intercultural utopias. Public intellectuals, cultural experimentation and ethnic pluralism in Colombia*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Rivera Cusicanqui, S. (1986). "Oprimidos pero no vencidos". *Luchas del campesinado aymara y qhechwa de Bolivia, 1900-1980*. Switzerland: UN.
- Rivera Cusicanqui, S. (1990). Liberal democracy and ayllu democracy in Bolivia: The case of Northern Potosí. *Journal of Development Studies*. 26(26), 97-121.
- Rivera Cusicanqui, S. (1993). La raíz: colonizadores y colonizados. In X. Albó & R. Barrios (Eds.), *Violencias encubiertas en Bolivia* (pp. 27-139). La Paz, Bolivia: hisbol.
- Rivera Cusicanqui, S. (2004 November/December). Reclaiming the Nation. *Nacla Report on the Americas* 38:(3), 19-23.
- Rivera, M. E. Sánchez Díaz de, & Almeida Acosta, E. (2005). *Las veredas de la incertidumbre. Relaciones interculturales y supervivencia digna*. México: Universidad Iberoamericana de Puebla.
- Robins, K. (2005) Identity. In T. Bennet, L. Grossberg, & M. Morris (Eds.), *New keywords. A revised vocabulary of culture and society* (pp. 172-175). United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing.
- Sanjinés, J. (2005). *El espejismo del mestizaje*. Bolivia: PIEB.
- Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and the arts of resistance. Hidden transcripts*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Silverblatt, I. (2005). Political disfranchisement. In A. Del Sarto, A. Ríos, & A. Trigo, (Eds.), *The Latin American cultural Studies Reader* (pp. 375-383). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

- Spivak, C. (1994). Can the subaltern speak? In P. Williams & L. Chrisman (Eds.), *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory* (pp. 66-111). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Spivak, C. The new subaltern: A silent interview. In V. Chaturvedi (Ed.), *Mapping subaltern studies and the postcolonial* (pp. 324-340). London: Verso.
- Spivak, C. (1997). Deconstruyendo la historiografía. In S. Rivera Cusicanqui & R. Barragán (Eds.), *Debates postcoloniales. Una introducción a los estudios de la subalternidad* (pp. 247-278). Bolivia: Editorial Historias.
- Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies. Research and indigenous peoples*. United Kingdom: Zed Books.
- Stephen, L. (2005). Gender, citizenship and the politics of identity. In J. Nash (Ed.) *Social movements. An anthropological reader*. United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing.
- Stephen, L. (2006). *Transborder lives: Indigenous Oaxacans in Mexico, California and Oregon*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Stephen, L. (2002). *Zapata lives!: Histories and cultural politics in Southern Mexico*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Stephenson, M. (2002). Forging an indigenous counterpublic sphere: The Taller de Historia Oral Andina in Bolivia. *Latin American Research Review*. Vol. 37(2) 99-118.
- Strobele-Gregor, J. (1996, Spring). Culture and political practice of the Aymara and Quechua in Bolivia: Autonomous forms of modernity in the Andes. In *Latin American Perspectives* 23(2), pp. 72-90.
- Temple, D., Layme, F., Michaux, J., González, & M., Blanco, E. (2003). *Las estructuras elementales de la reciprocidad*. La Paz, Bolivia: Plural Editores.
- Testimonio de una mujer aymara. (1986, January) Interview. *Chitakolla* newsletter No. 28, pp. 6-7.
- Thomson, S. (2003). Revolutionary memory in Bolivia: Anticolonial and national projects from 1781 to 1952. In M. M. S. Grindle & P. Domingo (Eds.), *Proclaiming revolution. Bolivia in comparative perspective* (pp. 117-134). University of London. 2003. Great Britain: University of London & Harvard University.

- Thomson, S. (2006) *Cuando sólo reinasen los indios. La política aymara en la era de la insurgencia*. Bolivia: Muela del Diablo Editores.
- Ticona, E. (2006). *El pachakuti ha empezado (pachakutixa qalltiwa)*. La Paz, Bolivia: Ed. Yachaywasi.
- United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Index Ratings for 2006, Retrieved from 10/16/07 at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics>.
- Warren, Kay B. (1998). *Indigenous movements and their critics*. Pan-Maya activism in Guatemala. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Warren, K. B. and Jackson, J. E. (2002). Introduction: Studying indigenous activism in Latin America. In K.B. Warren, K. B. and J.E. Jackson (Eds.), *Indigenous movements, self-representation and the State in Latin America* (pp. 1-46). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Weismantel, M. (2006). Real and imagined communities in the Andes. In Creed, Gerald W. E. (Ed.), *The seductions of community. Emancipations, oppressions, quandaries* (pp. 77-100). Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research.
- Widmark, C. (2003). *To make do in the city. Social identities and cultural transformations among Aymara speakers in La Paz*. Doctoral dissertation, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden.
- Yrigoyen, R. (2002). Perú: Pluralist constitution, monist judiciary – a post-reform assessment. In R. Sieder (Ed.), *Multiculturalism in Latin America. Indigenous rights, diversity and democracy* (pp. 157-183). Great Britain: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Yujra Mamani, C. (2005). *Los grandes pensamientos de nuestros antepasados. Laq'a achachilanakan jach'a tayka amuyt'awinakapa*. La Paz, Bolivia: C&C Editores.
- Zerda, M. (1997). *Desarrollo autogestionario de grupos culturalmente oprimidos: Experiencia de psicología comunitaria con aymaras urbanos en la ciudad de La Paz*. Unpublished undergraduate thesis, Universidad Católica Boliviana, La Paz, Bolivia.
- Zerda, M. (2005). *Vejez y pobreza en Bolivia: La visión de las personas de edad*. La Paz, Bolivia: Prisa Limitada.

Zoomers, A. & Salman, T. (2003). Straying Andean ways: Reflecting on Andean-ness in a globalizing world. In T. Salman & A. Zoomers, (Eds.), *Imaging the Andes: Shifting margins of a marginal world* (pp. 3-14). The Netherlands: CEDLA-Aksant.